PROTECTIVE FACTORS PROMOTING

PSYCHOSOCIAL RESILIENCE IN BIRACIAL YOUTHS

By

Gail K. Kawakami-Schwarber

RECOMMENDED:

Advisory Committee Chair

Chair, Counseling Program

Chair, Graduate Program, School of Education

APPROVED:

Dean, School of Education

Dean of the Graduate School

April 14, 2010

Date

PROTECTIVE FACTORS PROMOTING

PSYCHOSOCIAL RESILIENCE IN BIRACIAL YOUTHS

A

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty

of the University of Alaska Fairbanks

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the Degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

By

Gail K. Kawakami-Schwarber, B.A., M.A.

Fairbanks, Alaska

May 2010

Abstract

Resilience in adolescents is the achievement of positive outcomes and the attainment of developmental tasks in the face of significant risk. This study identified protective factors promoting resilience in the development of positive self-identity in biracial youths. The rapidly rising biracial youth population is a vulnerable group facing potentially higher risks for mental health and behavioral issues compared to their monoracial counterparts. Identity development, a central psychosocial task of adolescence, is a complex task for biracial youths since they must integrate two ethnic identities. For biracial youths, mastery of the psychosocial identity developmental task can be daunting as they face stressors such as racial stigmas and negative stereotypes, which may lead to identity problems manifesting during adolescence. Sixteen biracial individuals ranging from age 18 to 29 years participated in this qualitative research project. Comparisons were made to identify patterns and themes for factors affecting self-esteem and ethnic identity level among the participants. Brought to light were culturally-based protective factors stemming from individual, family, and social domains promoting psychosocial resilience in fostering healthy biracial identity resolution. Risk factors unique for the biracial population were also identified. The findings underscore the importance in understanding how the environment shapes and influences the ways biracial youth negotiate their dual identity. The research results can be integrated into appropriate prevention and intervention techniques for application by professionals and families to further healthy identity resolution in biracial youths.

Table of Contents

Page

Signature Page ..... **i**

Title Page ..... **ii**

Abstract ..... **iii**

Table of Contents ..... **iv**

List of Figures ..... **ix**

List of Tables ..... **ix**

List of Appendices ..... **x**

Acknowledgements ..... **xi**

Chapter 1 Introduction **1**

Statement of Problem 2

Statement of Purpose 2

Definition of Terms 3

Chapter 2 Literature Review **5**

Vulnerable Population 6

Issues Related to the Biracial Population 7

Adolescent Identity Development 9

Psychosocial Identity Process 10

Ecological Theory 10

Race, Culture, and Stereotypes 11

Page

Racial Identity Studies 13

Ethnic Identity and Self-Esteem 15

Ethnic Identity Models 17

Biracial Identity Models 21

Posten's biracial identity development model (BID) 21

Wardle's biracial model 21

The Kerwin-Ponterotto model 22

Root's biracial identity resolution theory 23

Resilience Concept 25

Models of Resilience 26

Challenge model 27

Cumulative effect model 27

Interaction model 27

Factors Influencing Resilience 28

Risk factors 28

Protective factors 28

Psychosocial protective factors 29

Self-Esteem 30

Developmental Outcomes of Resilience 31

Page

Chapter 3 Method **32**

Participants 32

Apparatus 33

Procedures 35

Data Analysis 36

Chapter 4 Results **37**

Self-Esteem Ranking and Data Comparison 38

Heritage and parents' heritage 39

First generation parents 39

Cultural knowledge 40

Self-identity and parental ethnic identification 42

Self-identity and identification with parents 42

Self-identity and role models 43

Ethnic Identity Levels and Data Comparison 44

Heritage and parents' heritage 44

First generation parents 44

Culture knowledge 47

Self-identity and parental ethnic identification 48

Self-identity and identification with parents 50

Self-identity and role models 50

Page

Comparison Between Self-Esteem Ranking and Ethnic Identity Levels....51

Self-esteem ranking....51

Ethnic identity levels....52

Identified Protective Factors....53

Personal Factors....53

Ethnic mixture....53

Ethnic heritage....54

Identity Factors....54

Positive and consistent labels from parents....54

Parental ethnic identity assignment....54

Identification with parents....54

Coping Skills....55

Ethnic identity discrepancy management....55

Identity fluctuation....55

Family Factors....56

First generation parent....56

Parents as role models....56

Extended family contact and acceptance....57

Page

Social and Community Factors 58

Cultural knowledge 58

Peer acceptance 59

Potential Risk Factors 60

Chapter 5 Discussion 62

Protective Factors for Biracial Identity Development 62

Additional Protective Factors 70

Risk Factors and Resilience 71

Implications 74

Practical Applications 76

Limitations 80

Future Directions 82

Conclusion 84

References 86

List of Figures

Page

Figure 1: Potential risk factors identified for biracial identity development 61

Figure 2: Protective factors identified for biracial identity development 63

List of Tables

Table 1: Self-Esteem, Heritage, Parents' Heritage and Generation to United States 40

Table 2: Self-Esteem, Self-Identity, Parental's Ethnic Identification and Cultural Knowledge 41

Table 3: Self-Esteem, Self-Identity, Role Model and Identified with Parent 43

Table 4: Ethnic Identity, Heritage, Parents' Heritage and Generation to United States....45

Table 5: Minority-White Ethnic Identity, Heritage and Parents' Heritage 46

Table 6: Minority-Minority Ethnic Identity, Heritage and Parents' Heritage 46

Table 7: Ethnic Identity, Self-Identity, Parental Ethnic Identification and Cultural Knowledge 47

Table 8: Minority-White Ethnic Identity, Self-Identity, Parental Ethnic Identification and Cultural Knowledge 49

Table 9: Minority-Minority Ethnic Identity, Self-Identity, Parental Ethnic Identification and Cultural Knowledge 49

Table 10: Ethnic Identity, Self-Identity, Role Model and Identified with Parent.....51

Table 11: Self-Esteem Ranking with Ethnic Identity Score 52

Table 12: Ethnic Identity Ranking with Self-Esteem Scores.....53

List of Appendices

Page

Appendix A: Informed Consent Form 99

Appendix B: Demographic Questionnaire 101

Appendix C: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale 105

Appendix D: Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure 107

Appendix E: Interview Guide 111

Acknowledgements

No doubt, completing a dissertation is a monumental achievement! This daunting undertaking came to fruition through the kind support and assistance from many remarkable people. Thank you to my friends and colleagues for your help and encouragement. A very grateful thank you is extended to all the participants for making this research possible by graciously providing their time and generously sharing their personal stories.

I extend my heartfelt thanks to my committee chairperson Dr. Allan Morotti and committee members Dr. Raymond Barnhardt, Dr. Anthony Strange and Dr. Timothy Lower for their wisdom and invaluable advice. A special thank you and deep gratitude to Dr. Allan Morotti for his patience, guidance, and unwavering support throughout the years! And last, but by no means least, I wish to recognize the late Dr. Gerald Mohatt who served as an invaluable committee member until he recently passed away; he is greatly missed.

Finally, a very warm and special thank you goes to my dear family for sustaining me with their love, understanding, and inspiration throughout this incredible endeavor. This accomplishment could not have been attained without the extraordinary encouragement, amazing support, wonderful sense of humor, and infinite cups of espresso from my husband Jim. Special thank you to my children Melissa and Jaimy for their incredible faith in their mom and constant cheering to accomplish this project! Mahalo nui loa and arigato gozaimasu!

Chapter 1 Introduction

The United States is rapidly evolving into a multicultural nation. With the blending of cultures, the faces of America are changing and this transformation is reflected in the rapid emergence of the mixed-race population. Barack Obama could arguably be the most recognized biracial individual in our nation. The recent election of Barack Obama as president of the United States triggered a surge in racial discussion within our country. Although Mr. Obama is biracial, his father Black and his mother White, society and the media label our president as Black. While President Obama appears to accept the racial identity imposed by society, he openly embraces his Black and White heritage and is at ease with his self-identity displaying high self-esteem and resilience in the face of adversity. He received a Juris Doctorate degree from Harvard, was selected "first Black" editor of the prestigious Harvard Law Review, taught law at the University of Chicago, was elected congressional senator for the State of Illinois, achieved the highest political office in the United States, and was recently awarded the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize. Undoubtedly, despite facing many challenges, Barack Obama's story is a positive one full of achievement and success.

However, for many biracial individuals this may not be the case as research has revealed that the biracial adolescent population faces higher risks for mental health and behavioral issues. Identity development is a central psychosocial task of adolescence and for biracial youths this task is more complex in comparison with their White and monoracial minority peers. Biracial youths must navigate through this major developmental task by integrating two ethnic identities while dealing with adversities

such as negative stereotyping, rejection by their ethnic groups, being marginalized and finding a racial identity imposed upon them (Sue & Sue, 2003).

Researchers studying resilience identified naturally occurring personal and environmental resources that help children and adolescents overcome life's many challenges (Snyder & Lopez, 2006). These resources can provide a shield from the effects of risks or adversity. There is a pressing need to conduct research to identify protective factors that foster the development of self-esteem and resilience which in turn may facilitate positive outcomes for individuals from this unique population.

Statement of Problem

It is essential for counselors and educators to be knowledgeable and competent in working with biracial children and adolescents. Currently, due to the lack of research specifically focusing upon protective factors fostering resilience in biracial population, it is crucial to conduct research in this area. The bulk of the research literature on biracial youth population focuses upon the negative psychopathology correlated with the developmental tasks of self-identity. It is vital to expand the field of empirical biracial studies to include resilience research to provide practical information for assisting the young biracial population. This requires research focusing upon developmental and ecological processes leading to positive outcomes for shaping a wellness framework of building strengths and healthy self-identity development.

Statement of Purpose

The central purpose of this research is to distill protective factors contributing to the development of positive self-identity in biracial youths allowing those in the helping

profession to understand and assist this unique population. Specifically this includes examining the roles played by the biracial participants' dual heritage, the ecological influences upon the processing of their identity, and identifying culturally-based protective factors ameliorating adversity and fostering resilience during the adolescent developmental transition. The research will also identify areas for future research and provide insights for counselors, educators, and parents to better assist this growing population of youths in preparing for the major task of adolescence.

Definition of Terms

The definitions provided are solely for the use of this study. The term *biracial* is defined as a person "with two socially and phenotypically distinct racial heritages, one from each parent" (Root, 1992, p. 11) and is used interchangeably with the terms multiracial or mixed-race. *Multiracial* and *mixed-race* is a person with more than one race or ethnicity. *Monoracial* refers to a person of one race whereas biracial refers to "someone having biological parents from different racial or ethnic groups" (Harris, 2002, p. 1).

Race is a socially construed concept that uses the phenotype or common biological features to differentiate people; used interchangeably with the term ethnic unless noted otherwise. *Ethnicity* is a "group classification of individuals who share a unique social and cultural heritage (customs, language, religion, and so on) passed on from generation to generation" (Casas, 1984, p. 787). Ethnicity will also be used to encompass race since the psychological importance of race derives largely from how one is responded by others based on visible racial characteristics and the implications of such

responses (Phinney, 1996). The terms ethnic and ethnically are used interchangeably with race and racially unless noted otherwise.

The terms *majority* and *White majority* are interchangeable terms regarding the White majority of predominantly European descent in the United States.

Self-concept is defined as the notion of who we think we are and self-esteem is how we feel about ourselves and reflect how we feel about our self-concept (Jaffe, 1998).

Resilience is defined as a pattern of positive adaptation in the context of past or present adversity (O'Dougherty Wright & Masten, 2006). A *protective factor* is the quality of a person or context or their interaction that predicts better outcomes (O'Dougherty Wright & Masten, 2006). A *risk* is an elevated probability of an undesirable outcome, while a *risk factor* is a measurable characteristic in a group of individuals or their situation that predicts negative outcome on a specific outcome criterion (O'Dougherty Wright & Masten, 2006).

The rapidly increasing biracial youth population is a potentially vulnerable one and the resilience research for this population is astonishingly lacking. The bulk of biracial literature and studies tend to focus upon theory and pathology of the biracial population. In the spirit of the wellness model, this research focuses upon building psychosocial resilience by identifying protective factors that may predict successful adaptation for biracial youths during the challenging psychosocial task of identity development.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

The multiracial population is rapidly increasing in the United States. Currently, two out of ten babies born in some U.S. cities are multiracial (Nakazawa, 2003). According to the 2000 U.S. Census (2001), 6.8 million (2.4%) individuals identified as more than one race, of this 2.9 million (42%) were under the age of eighteen years old. Fourteen states exceeds the U.S. 2.4% rate of two or more races with Hawaii leading at 21% followed by Alaska with 5.4% (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Minority racial groups reporting the highest percentage of more than one race were American Indian, Alaska Native, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander populations (DeBose, 2003).

In Alaska, the multiracial population is also growing. Alaska's total population is 627,000 and from this 31,350 selected the more than one race category (Leask, Killorin, & Martin, 2001). The total population of children under18 years of age in Alaska was 190,717 and of this 10.27% identified as being of mixed-race (Lopez, 2003).

Biracial adolescents are an emerging population "who have some unique characteristics, related to their ambiguous ethnicity and their need to define their dimension" (Gibbs, 1998, p. 305). Due to their unique characteristics, biracial youths may have some potential problems and special needs that are related to their dual ethnicities (Gibbs, 1998; Wehrly, 1996). These youths are faced with challenges and pressures in defining who they are. The identity process can be challenging since they have two different heritages with which to identify and belong. This multicultural phenomenon is generating increasing research relative to ethnic and racial issues and especially to understanding the identity formation of biracial individuals.

Vulnerable Population

The biracial youth population is a vulnerable group. The National Longitudinal Survey of Adolescent Health (NLSAH), conducted in 1994 and 1995 with a cluster sampling of 6,504 adolescents and 4,600 parents, measured the impact the social environment may have upon the physical and mental health of adolescents in the United States. Several studies (Cooney & Radina, 2000; Milan & Keiley, 2000; Udry, Li, & Hendrickson-Smith, 2003) utilizing the NLSAH results determined that biracial youths have a greater risk for mental health and behavioral issues.

Cooney and Radina's (2000) findings indicate that multiracial boys have a higher rate of depression and a higher frequency of school suspension, and multiracial girls have a higher frequency for delinquent acts than their monoracial peers. Compared to their White and monoracial minority counterparts, biracial youths reported "significantly more maladjustment than other youths in reports of behavioral conduct, school problems, somatization, and general self-worth" (Milan & Keiley, 2000, p. 2). Multiracial youths reported suffering a higher rate of negative affective behavior such as feeling depressed, having sleep problems, waking up tired and also psychosomatic symptoms including aches, pains and headaches (Udry et al., 2003).

The findings from the Minority Youth Health Project sampling of 2,082 students from the Seattle public middle schools showed that multiracial youths reported higher rates of behavior problems indicating this group is at a heightened risk of behavior problems compared to their monoracial counterparts (Choi, Harachi, Gillmore, & Catalano, 2006).

Although the majority of articles on the development of biracial identity remain theoretical and lacking in actual empirical research, similar issues were identified such as integrating dual racial/ethnic identifications while also developing a positive self-concept and sense of competence. As they enter into adolescence, biracial youths need to "synthesize their earlier identification into a coherent and stable sense of a personal identity as well as a positive racial identity" (Gibbs, 1998, p. 313).

Issues Related to the Biracial Population

Mixed-race individuals may face issues leading to major psychological and social stressors during their identity formation, lowered self-esteem and existing between margins of two cultures (Root, 2001). These issues include having a racial identity imposed upon them, facing stereotypes and myths of mixed-race individuals and interracial couples and having to justify their existence (Sue & Sue, 2003).

Historically, the rule of hypodescent was a way society tried to impose a racial identity upon mixed-race people and maintain slavery. To keep the White blood lines pure and maintain supremacy, the one drop of blood rule was established. A person with just one drop of Black blood was considered contaminated and therefore classified as Black (Root, 1996; Sue & Sue, 2003). Through the hypodescent rule, the social standing for an individual with a minority and White majority heritage is usually classified with the ethnic minority group rather than the privileged majority group.

Stereotypes and myths of biracial individuals and interracial couples were created to stigmatize and to prevent intermixing of the races. Interracial marriages were illegal in some states until the middle of the twentieth century. The social prohibition against

mixed marriages naturally subjected the children of supposedly unholy and immoral union to negative stereotypes. Mixed-raced children were viewed as doomed to suffer identity problems, have low self-esteem, be marginalized and socially isolated.

In 1967, the Supreme Court repealed the laws against miscegenation with the Loving versus Virginia decision. However, the negative vestiges of racism remain and permeate in society. For example, in October 2009, a Louisiana justice of the peace denied an interracial couple a marriage license citing that interracial marriages do not last and for his concern that children born from such relationship will suffer (Ellzey, 2009; "Justice Refuses Couple," 2009).

Biracial individuals are often asked questions that position them to justify their existence because their appearance may not fit the racial purity concept of the questioner, such as "What are you?" They are barraged with questions about their racial identity from childhood through adulthood. Often the answers are followed with more questions about their parents' race and why they got married.

Biracial individuals may start to feel fragmented and picked apart when asked about the different parts of their ethnic identities. This might be perceived as a societal message of not belonging to society and that something is wrong with them (Sue & Sue, 2003).

Biracial individuals linger in an identity purgatory, marginalized because they exist on the margins of one or several worlds, and not fully accepted in any (Stonequist, 1937). Society views them as fractionalized because they are composed of fractions of ethnicity. They may not be accepted by either of the ethnic monoracial groups that

comprise their heritage. Throughout their lives, multiracial individuals must confront the process of resolving marginality and developing a healthy identity (Sue & Sue, 2003).

Adolescent Identity Development

Adolescence is a difficult period for many teenagers. It is a time of intensifying self-awareness as their bodies and minds mature rapidly. It is a period of biological, cognitive, and emotional transition into adulthood that directly impacts their development. They are very concerned about how others view them as well as their own self-perceptions. They are seeking to find the answer to the primary questions they ask themselves: "Who am I?" and "Where do I fit in?" Many theories attempting to explain the processes of adolescent self-concept and self-identity tend to focus upon the identity formation of the White adolescents and thus failed to consider the experiences of ethnic minorities.

Ethnic minority teens, by the nature of their phenotype stick out in a school with a White majority population. When adolescents perceive that physically they do not blend in with their peers this may have a negative impact upon the development of self-identity. At times, ethnic minority teens may feel marginalized since they do not fit the perception of the White All-American stereotype. Eventually monoracial minority adolescents may find a way to fit in by committing to their particular ethnic group and achieve identity resolution.

On the other hand, biracial youths may often find that they are forced to choose between their ethnic groups and their White peers, resulting in an internal conflict of

rejecting part of their self-identity. Even if they choose one ethnic identity over the other, they may still feel as if they do not completely fit in because of their biracial appearance.

Psychosocial Identity Process

In 1968, Erik Erikson published his seminal work on adolescent development. Erikson brought to attention the concept of identity and the affect of social environment on the individual's development. Erikson's psychosocial theory held that children develop through a series of stages. Each stage has a specific task that the individual must accomplish or face the risks that each stage presents. During the adolescent stage the main focus for the child is to achieve a sense of identity with the risk being role confusion over who and what the individual wants to be. A major task of adolescence is to establish an autonomous identity. The impact of early experience from social interaction prior to this stage influences the development of identity. A drawback with Erikson's theory is that it focuses primarily on developmental issues of the White dominant culture, specifically, developmental issues of White males.

Ecological Theory

Whereas Erikson provided a developmental framework for the identity process, Bronfenbrenner (1979) proposed an ecological framework stressing the importance of understanding the relationship between the individual and various environmental systems such as family, peers, school, community, and culture. Bronfenbrenner posited four interlocking systems: The *microsystem*, which is the child; the *mesosystem* consisting of the family, school, peers, and religious institutions; the *exosystem* includes the extended

family, neighbors, family friends, the media, legal and social welfare systems; and the *macrosystem* are the attitudes and ideologies of the culture.

The individual is an active participant within each system and "development involves the interplay between children and their changing relationships with these different ecological systems" (Hetherington & Parke, 1999, p. 33). Importantly, Bronfenbrenner recognized that the four systems change over time and labeled this dimension of his model as the chronosystem. The chronosystem addressed that over time both the individual and the environmental surrounding of that person change and affects identity development. It is necessary to include and understand how these constant shifts influence the development of individuals throughout their lifetime.

Race, Culture, and Stereotypes

The concept of race was established as a maneuver to morally and legally legitimatize colonization and slavery. This attempt to keep the White race "pure" fostered racism and discrimination. "Race was equated with distinct hereditary characteristics. Differences in intelligence, temperament, and sexuality were deemed to be racial in character. Racial intermixture was seen a sin against nature" (Omi & Winant, 1994, p. 15).

Culture, an invisible difference, is usually associated with the most obvious physical difference (race), that is, the color of people's skin and other physical characteristics (Kronenwetter, 1992). Human tendency is to recognize or stereotype different ethnic groups by using visible cues such as a person's race and in this way, cultural and racial prejudices along with stereotypes often get mixed together.

Stereotyping is a first step toward cognitive maturation and influences an individual's self-identification, the way one perceives and identifies oneself within society.

Stereotypes can be negative or positive. For example, Black people are typically stereotyped as being athletic or great entertainers. However, in general, Black people also unfairly suffer from negative stereotypes such as being lazy, trouble-makers and criminally inclined (Boesel, Berk, Groves, Eidson, & Rossi, 1971). On the other hand, Japanese Americans, in general, face having positive stereotypes and are often characterized as excelling in math, being successful, and the model minority (Levine & Montero, 1973; Ogawa, 1971; Pang, Mizokawa, Morishima, & Olstad, 1985; Sue & Kitano, 1973). Positive stereotypes can have negative effects, as they may impose pressure upon those who fall short of societal expectations.

Whether positive or negative, ethnic stereotypes may affect individuals' ethnic identification, the perception of being a certain ethnicity and the psychological effects this perception may have on the individuals. Social scientists have demonstrated a significant positive relationship between racial identity and various mental health indices, including self-esteem and feelings of anxiety and inferiority among youths of color (Carter, 1991; Kerwin, Ponterotto, Jackson, & Harris, 1993; Nottingham, Rosen, & Parks, 1992; Parham & Helms, 1985a, 1985b).

According to Parham and Helms (1985b), there is sufficient consideration in determining specific cultural issues, such as how being Black in a predominantly White environment may influence personality development and the psychological adjustment of Black individuals in this environment. This influence is applicable to the psychological

development and psychological adjustment of other minority group members or persons of color in a White majority society.

The Majority group - Minority group experience is an important factor of ethnic identity since it concerns how individuals perceive themselves as fitting into society and it also affects their overall self-concept. Ethnic identification and preference are important because they may give insight into how our social environment interacts with our ethnic awareness affecting and shaping self-identity.

Racial Identity Studies

The study of racial identity and ethnic identity differs in one important aspect. Ethnic identity research is intentionally broad to explain the impact of culture and the history of ethnic identity among various groups (Kazdin, 2000). Racial identity tends to focus upon how racism influences racial identity.

Clark and Clark's (1939, 1940, 1950) research conducted in the earlier half of the twentieth century provided the backbone for studies in the area of race identification and race preference among children. The Clarks focused on Black children as subjects for testing and comparing racial identification and racial preference. Subjects were presented dolls of different skin colors (brown and white) and asked to choose the doll that goes with a positive or negative characteristic. The majority of the subjects usually chose the brown doll that looked bad. The Clarks (1940) found that the Black children (49%) had a strong tendency to select the white doll and reject the brown doll when asked which doll looks most like the child (self-identification).

The Clarks (1939) postulated the *escape hypothesis* to explain why the Black children tended to select the white dolls instead of the brown dolls with the self-identification question. The escape hypothesis suggests that racial minority children wish to escape from their minority status and be White due to the intra-psychic distress generated by the conflict between the child's racial identity and the perceived value of that race in society (Corenblum & Annis, 1986).

In response to the Clarks and other similar studies, Williams and Morland (1976) offered an alternative explanation, the *light-color bias hypothesis*. Through social learning, children learn that light is synonymous with all that is good, clean, and nice. Concomitantly, they learn to associate dark with all that is bad, dirty, and mean. Therefore, Black children selected white dolls as the ones they preferred or looked like because that would mean they were good, clean, and nice. Selecting the brown doll would mean that they were bad, dirty, and mean.

Other researchers have confirmed findings for both the light-colored hypothesis and the escape hypothesis and have demonstrated that the results apply not only to Blacks, but also to other groups of color, such as Hispanics, Chinese, and Native Americans (Aboud & Skerry, 1984; Brand, Ruiz, & Padilla, 1974; Corenblum & Annis, 1986, 1987; George & Hoppe, 1979; Gopaul-McNicol, 1988; Hunsberger, 1976; Vedantam, 2010). For example, the study conducted by Corenblum and Annis' (1986) using pictures instead of dolls with the Ojibwa children in Canada supported both the light-color bias hypothesis and the escape hypothesis. However, Corenblum and Annis

stated there may be other factors affecting the subjects' choices in the racial self-identification and preference tests and postulated the *construct accessibility theory*.

The construct accessibility theory proposes that other factors may be affecting subjects' selection in the race self-identification test. The premise of this theory is that cues, such as the experimenter's race, may prime race and race-related constructs, thereby making it more accessible for encoding race-related information. This makes subjects more likely to attend to and process stimuli in terms of race rather than other constructs. Corenblum and Annis (1986) found evidence that Native North American children tended to respond differently when they were tested by a Native experimenter than by a White experimenter, which supported their theory. This study also demonstrated that subjects' immediate environment also has an effect on their perception.

Social environment is an important variable that may influence race identity and preference. In a more racially diverse setting, minority children tend to make more accurate selections of race self-identity. Studies conducted by Ramsey and Myers (1990), and Semaj (1981) indicate that children in a heterogeneous community may be more accustomed to distinguishing themselves by race (Ramsey, 1991).

Ethnic Identity and Self-Esteem

Ethnic identity refers to the sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group and is a major component of self-concept. Self-concept is a notion of whom we think we are, and self-esteem is how we feel about ourselves and reflects how we feel about our self-concept (Jaffe, 1998; Rosenberg, 1979). Ethnic identity is an important predictor of self-esteem for people of color because of the attitudes a person can attach to one's ethnic

heritage (Phinney, Cantu, & Kurtz, 1997). At about the age of 4, children develop the ability to identify one's own and others' ethnic group (Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995; Wardle, 1992). For adolescents, ethnic identity involves the beliefs and attitudes related to membership in an ethnic group (Jaffe, 1998; Phinney, et al., 1997).

For minority and biracial youths, ethnic identity plays a major role in the development of a positive self-concept. The attitudes developed about their ethnic group can be one of pride or embarrassment. Negative or positive attachment to one's ethnicity influences perception of place in society, self-concept and affects self-esteem. Biracial adolescents face double challenges of dealing with conflicts about their social marginality associated with their ethnicities and with their dual ethnic identity.

Ethnic identity is a multidimensional construct with several components (Kazdin, 2000): ethnic self-identification (self-labeling); affective components (feelings of belonging to an ethnic groups/attitudes and evaluations associated with ethnicity); cognitive components (knowledge of ethnic group's history and tradition along with one's understanding of ethnicity and its implication); value orientations associated with ethnicity (worldview and relationship with self and others).

Central to ethnic identity is the strong association with an individual's situation and experiences within society, the minority experience (Phinney & Ong, 2007). For members of minority groups or people of color, "the significance of their group membership may lie in part in the struggle to gain equality, recognition, and acceptance in a predominantly White society" (Phinney & Ong, 2007, p. 923).

Members of ethnic minority groups have experienced discrimination historically due to their unique biological characteristics that enabled potential discriminators to easily identify them (Banks & Banks, 1993). In a predominantly White society, people of color may face societal barriers. Ethnic minorities may feel marginalized because of their physical or language differences and are usually exposed to stereotypical views of their ethnic groups, which tend to be negative. For adolescents of the majority or privileged groups, ethnicity is less central to achieve identity because these individuals blend in with the majority (Jaffe, 1998); they usually do not face many of the experiences an ethnic minority individual may have to overcome such as facing lower status and experiencing discrimination stemming from residual prejudicial attitudes.

Affirmation of one's ethnicity is a way to preserve self-esteem and affirmation is strongest with ethnic groups that have faced greater discrimination (Kazdin, 2000). There is a positive relationship between ethnic identity and self-esteem based on the notion that individual's self-concept are formed in large with their group membership. Individuals who feel positively about their ethnic group membership display higher levels of self-esteem (Umana-Taylor & Shin, 2007).

Ethnic Identity Models

To study ethnic identity, developmental psychologists have drawn from cognitive development theory, social identity theory and psychosocial theory. Cognitive development theory focuses upon children's increasing cognitive competence as a basis for understanding the changes in ethnic identity with age (Kazdin, 2000). Children typically learn their ethnic labels between the age of 4 and 7 years and develop an

understanding that ethnicity stays the same and does not change (ethnic constancy) around the age of 8 to 10 years (Aboud, 1987).

The cognitive development of children influences the way they understand ethnicity. Young children understand ethnicity in concrete and literal terms, such as by language, food, and customs. As cognitive competence matures, children develop an awareness of group (group consciousness) and begin to understand ethnicity as norms of ethnic behavior, and then by adolescence and adulthood, in more abstract terms, as evolving over time, and influenced by social and historical forces (Kazdin, 2000).

The majority of social identity theory (SIT) is influenced largely from Henri Tajfel (Kazdin, 2000). According to SIT, people are strongly influenced by social groups, such as religious, occupational, or political groups, to which they belong and form an important foundation for identity. Maintaining a positive sense of self is a fundamental need and underlies the tendency to evaluate one's own group positively. Identity issues may arise from negative stereotypes of one's ethnic group within society. Therefore, to preserve self-esteem, affirmation of one's ethnicity is a way of dealing with the denigration of one's group by others (Kadzin, 2000).

According to SIT, from an early age, children are influenced about their ethnicity by family, community and society. Children develop a positive feeling of their ethnicity if the family provides a strong and positive image of their ethnicity. The ethnic community also provides a context for children to form a positive sense of their ethnic group. Children also are influenced by the messages from society. If the messages are negative and become internalized this may develop into conflicted feelings about their

ethnicity, which includes the desire to belong to another group. Therefore, these negative attitudes must be confronted and dealt with as part of the formation of ethnic identity (Kazdin, 2000).

Psychosocial identity development theories are based on ego identity theory (Erikson, 1968) and identity components based on exploration and commitment, foreclosure, diffusion, moratorium, and identity achievement (Marcia, Waterman, Matteson, Archer, & Orlofsky, 1993) such as Phinney's (1990) *Three-stage Model of Ethnic Identity Formation*. The formation of ethnic identity for minority individuals is first processed through the stage of *unexamined ethnic identity*. The second stage, of *ethnic identity search-moratorium*, occurs during adolescence as part of the identity formation task where experience with discrimination may trigger an *ethnic exploration* and the meanings attached to their ethnic membership. Finally after exploration, ideally ethnic identity achievement is reached.

Identity models for specific ethnic groups were postulated including those of African Americans (Cross, 1971, 1995), Asian-American (Kim, 1981), Chicano/Latino (Arce, 1981; Ruiz, 1990), as well as Whites (Helms, 1985, 1990). Major criticisms of these theories include that they were developed from a monoracial perspective rather than a multiracial one, based on a false assumption that multiracial individuals will be accepted by their parent culture and the linear nature were too simplistic to explain the complexity of the numerous multiracial resolutions as detailed by Maria Root's (2003) *Biracial Identity Resolution Theory* (Sue & Sue 2003).

Other ethnic identification research focused on a broader scope and acknowledged common factors that may influence all ethnic minority groups such as the Phinney's (1990) Three-stage Model of Ethnic Identity Formation and the *Racial/Cultural Identity Development* (R/CID) model (Sue & Sue, 2003). According to the R/CID model, an individual belongs to one racial/cultural group and has the choice to accept or reject the other race/culture (Sue & Sue, 2003). The R/CID model "defines five stages of development that oppressed people may experience as they struggle to understand themselves in terms of their own culture, the dominant culture, and the oppressive relationship between the two cultures" (Sue & Sue, 2003, p. 214). Identity development in people of color is a continuous process where stages blend with one another and there are no clear boundaries between the stages. Ethnic minority individuals may not necessarily experience all of these stages in their lifetime. Depending on the individuals' experiences, they can start at different levels and the stages of development are also reversible. For example, they may start at a higher stage level then make a transition to a lower stage level.

However, ethnic identity models for single ethnic groups and universal models for all ethnic groups are not appropriate for biracial children (Wescott, 1991). Identity development for biracial children is a complex task for they must "integrate identifications with parents from two distinct ethnic backgrounds within the context of a predominantly White culture, deal with a society that views their normal family life as pathological because it is interracial, and simultaneously negotiate their status in the peer

group" (Wescott, 1991, p. 3). Popular models specifically for the biracial population are presented below.

Biracial Identity Models

Posten's biracial identity development model (BID). In 1990, Posten proposed the BID model, a five stage developmental process in understanding the identity development of biracial persons. This model implies an age-stage process. The first stage is the *personal identity* stage where race variable may not be the salient issue. The second stage is the *choice of group categorization* where pressure to make a reference group choice becomes real. The third stage of *enmeshment/denial* is confusion with or without guilt, which exist by having to choose an identity not fully expressive of one. The fourth stage is *appreciation* where biracial values are explored and the reference group broadened. Finally in the *integration* stage, both identities are valued and integrated and find expression in one's lifestyle. "The BID model removes the stigma of inherent maladjustment for the biracial person and allows for the integration of two or more identities for a holistic expression of the biracial individual's personality and lifestyle" (Wescott, 1991, p. 4). Posten's model suggests biracial individuals will develop healthy biracial identity through the progress of the developmental stages.

Wardle's biracial model. Wardle (1992) proposed a model that encompassed developmental and ecological factors. Ecological theory stresses the importance of understanding the relationship between the individual and various environmental systems such as the family, peers, school, community, and culture (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). A healthy biracial identity is achieved with the progression of the developmental stages and

also by the integration of ecological factors such as family, minority context, majority context, group antagonism and community. Wardle's model has two stages: stage I (3 to 7 years old) and stage II (adolescence).

According to Wardle (1992), biracial children must progress through these two important stages. The first stage corresponds to the "time researchers and theorists have identified for ethnic identity formation for single race children; the latter stage to the period of identity development" (p. 1). The ecological components determine whether or not the child will successfully progress through these stages. A child who is able to complete the first stage successfully with a healthy biracial identity will be in a better position to progress successfully through adolescence. The quality of each ecological component will instrumentally affect the child's self-identity concept; each developmental stage has a unique role in this healthy development (Wardle, 1992).

The Kerwin-Ponterotto model. The Kerwin-Ponterotto (1995) model of biracial development "recognizes that the eventual resolution of the steps toward biracial identity formation is dependent on numerous personal, societal, and environmental factors" (p. 210) and that the actual resolution is individual. The example given that a person may identify himself in public as being Black, but hold a self-concept of being multiracial. This model consists of six stages: *preschool, entry to school, preadolescence, adolescence, college/young adulthood* and *adulthood.*

Racial awareness emerges during the preschool stage (up to five years old) and biracial preschoolers notice physical differences such as hair texture and skin color between their parents. During the entry to school stage, the tendency of classifying others

into social categories begin and children start to describe their skin color or use labels provided by parents. At the preadolescence stage, there is an increase in awareness that physical appearance may affect group membership. However, at this stage, "children tend to use labels representative of social groups by race, ethnicity, and/or religious background" (Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995, p. 212).

The adolescence stage may be the most challenging due to the combination of developmental factors and societal pressures. This is the stage where teenagers perceive the pressure to having to choose one racial group over another. According to Kerwin and Ponterotto (1995), although this stage tends to be the most turbulent, peer and societal pressures to select "specific racial groups may be neutralized" (p. 212) when peers are grouped together by non-racial interests such sport teams, clubs and academics abilities and interests.

During the college/young adulthood stage as one attains a more secure personal identity, "rejection of others' expectations and an acceptance of one's biracial and bicultural heritage is increasingly likely to occur" (Kerwin & Ponterotto, 1995, p. 213). In adulthood, biracial identity is a process continuing through life and a continuous exploration and integration and discovery to effectively function in various situations and communities.

Root's biracial identity resolution theory. For biracial individuals, the goal for the major developmental task during adolescence is to achieve resolution regarding the conflicts of their dual ethnic identity so they can resolve the tasks of achieving a sense of where they fit in society. A healthy identity resolution can take on one or more forms.

Root (2003) theorized five healthy identity resolutions of biracial identity: identity society assigns; single identity; mixed identity; new race identity; and White identity. When an individual chooses the identity society assigns, it is a healthy choice if the individual is satisfied with the identity and receives family support for this identity.

Selecting a single identity is healthy when the individual actively chooses the ethnic group identity and not society. This single identity tends to remain constant even if there are changes in situational context. This is healthy if the individual does not deny the other racial identity. In choosing a mixed identity, individuals resolve marginality by shifting identities depending which ethnic group they are interacting with. This is healthy if the individuals view the ability to move in both worlds positively and can relate well to both aspects of identities and cultures. Selecting a new race identity occurs when the individual chooses a blended identity and this selection is healthy if there is an equal valuing of all aspects of the ethnic heritage. Another healthy identity resolution is choosing a White identity and this may occur if individuals do not have a disdain or emotional attachment to their heritage. Due to the loss of their ethnic identification, the individuals' default identification is White, which is reflects their lifestyle and the community they live in. Achievement of a healthy identity resolution can be less challenging by providing biracial youths with protective factors that foster resilience and encourage positive adaptation when faced with challenges stemming from the psychosocial task of identity development.

Resilience Concept

Positive psychology is a catalytic movement creating a paradigm shift in psychology. The shifting is from the preoccupied model of repairing the worst things in life toward a model that includes building the best qualities of life (Seligman, 2005). Rather than focusing exclusively on the disease model of pathology, a current trend is toward a model of building strength and positive outcomes. Salutogenisis, a term coined by Antovnosky (1979), describes developmental processes leading to wellness outcomes (Schoon, 2006). Instead of focusing upon what prevents individuals from getting ill, the wellness framework asks how individuals become healthier. One movement that embodies the wellness framework is the area of resilience. Resilience is the capacity of a child in dealing effectively with stress and pressure, coping with everyday challenges, rebounding from disappointments, mistakes, trauma and adversity, developing clear and realistic goals, solving problems, interacting comfortably with others, and treating oneself and others with respect and dignity (Brooks, 2006).

Werner (2000) searched for the roots of resilience in high risk children and youths, who successfully coped with biological and psychosocial risk factors, armed with protective factors that assisted in their recovery as they transitioned into adulthood. It seems that the resilience process stems from everyday occurrences. Masten (2001) coined the term "ordinary magic" in which resilience appears from "the everyday magic of ordinary, normative human resources in the minds, brains and bodies of children in their families and relationships and in their communities" (p. 235). Goldstein and Brooks (2006) write that the resilience process reflects the powers of the ordinary and increases

focus on understanding the protective variables that allows some children to function well in these environments and to continue functioning well.

Resilience concept has three underlying dynamics (Masten, Hubbard, Gest, Tellegen, Garmezy, & Ramirez, 1999; Werner, 2000). First, there are positive developmental outcomes from those with high risk background despite the experience of adversity or high risk backgrounds. Second, there is a sustained competence, continued positive or effective functioning under conditions of stress. Third, there is a successful recovery after serious trauma.

Resilience is a construct that involves an exposure to adversity and the manifestation of successful adaptation in the face of adversity. Resilience is generally identified by determining if an individual is doing well and is there currently or in the past any significant risk or adversity to prevail (Schoon, 2006). "A central assumption in the study of resilience is that some individuals are doing well, despite being exposed to an adverse risk situation, while others fail to adapt" (Schoon, 2006, p. 7).

Models of Resilience

Three models of resilience describe the possible links between risks, resource factors and adjustment (Schoon, 2006). The *protection model*, also known as the interaction model, assumes that resource factors interact with risk factors to reduce the risk on an outcome. The *cumulative effect*, also known as the compensatory model, is based on the assumption that a direct effect of the resource factors on the outcome and that resource factors counteract the risk factors. The *challenge* or *inoculation* model

assumes that stress can potentially enhance competence, and association between the risk factor and outcome is curvilinear (Schoon, 2006; Werner, 2000).

Challenge model. According to the challenge model, like an immunization shot providing protection to future exposure, low levels of risk exposure is beneficial, as it provides an opportunity to practice problem-solving skills and mobilize resources (Schoon, 2006; Werner, 2000). It prepares a developing individual to overcome significant risks in the future.

Cumulative effect model. The cumulative effect model suggests that assets and resources combine to compensate or counteract the effects of adversity (Schoon, 2006; Werner, 2000). Theoretically, increasing the quality or number of protective factors would offset the harmful effects of adversity or improve positive adjustment.

Interaction model. With the interaction model, protective factors moderate the influence of adversity on outcomes. Having exposure to protective factors brings beneficial results only to those exposed to risk factors and not upon those who are not exposed to risk factors. Therefore, this model suggests that there is an interactive relationship between the protective factor, exposure to risks, and the outcome (Schoon, 2006).

These three models are not mutually exclusive and may operate simultaneously or serially depending upon the resilient individual's adaptive repertoire and stage of development (Werner, 2000).

Factors Influencing Resilience

Resilience is an end product of a buffering process, allowing the individual to deal effectively with future risks and stress (Werner, 2000). Researchers have found several interrelated domains influencing the resilience process. These domains stem from the individual, the family and the social or community environments which contain protective factors (O'Dougherty Wright & Masten, 2006; Masten & Reed, 2005; Schoon, 2006). Children exposed to protective factors develop resilience as these factors ameliorate risks and adversity (Werner, 2000).

Risk factors. A risk is defined as "an elevated probability of an undesirable outcome" and risk factors as "a measurable characteristic in a group of individuals or their situation that predicts negative outcome on a specific outcome criteria" (O'Dougherty Wright & Masten, 2006, p.19).

Goldstein and Brooks (2006) generalized that youth face two distinct types of risk factors. One type reflects the at-risk situation of the general population, e.g., a child raised in an environment with a depressed mother or absent father. The other type of risk includes factors that characterize a more or less positive outcome among groups with specified risks or those with seemingly little risks.

Protective Factors. Researchers studying resilience identified naturally occurring personal and environmental resources that helped children and adolescents overcome life's may challenges (Snyder & Lopez, 2006). These resources are protective factors that provide a shield from the effects of risks or adversity. Protective factors moderate the impact of adversity on adaptation and stem from characteristics of the individual, the

family, the community and the culture or society (O'Dougherty Wright & Masten, 2006). When armed with protective factors, people with resilience are able to bounce back or positively adapt in the face of adversity.

Psychosocial protective factors. Masten and Reed (2005) listed the most commonly reported potential protective factors identified in psychosocial resilience research; these "protective factors measure differential attributes of the child, the family, other relationships and the major contexts in which children and youth develop" (p. 82). Masten and Reed's (2005) list of protective factors identified within the child included good cognitive abilities including problem-solving and attentional skills; easy temperament in infancy and adaptable personality later in development; positive self-perceptions and self-efficacy; faith and a sense of meaning in life; positive outlook on life; good regulation of emotional arousal and impulses; talents valued by self and society; and a good sense of humor. Protective factors within family and other relationships includes close relationships with caregiving adults; authoritative parenting; positive family climate with low discord between parents; organized home environment; postsecondary education of parents; parents have individual qualities listed above as protective factors; parents involved in child's education; socioeconomic advantages; close relationships to competent, pro-social, and supportive adults; and connections to pro-social and rule-abiding peer (Masten & Reed, 2005). Protective factors identified within the community were effective schools; ties to prosocial organizations, including schools, clubs, scouting; high levels of public safety and good emergency social services; and good public health and health care availability (Masten & Reed, 2005).

Self-Esteem. A strong and consistent predictor of resilience in childhood and adolescent are cognitive abilities (Deater-Deckard, Ivy, & Smith, 2006). One such cognitive component is self-worth or self-esteem. Brooks (1994) writes, "resilient children appear to maintain a high level of self-esteem, a realistic sense of personal control, and a feeling of control" (p. 546).

High self-esteem and self-efficacy provide effective protection against the effects of a wide variety of risk factors. Self-esteem is crucial and the core of human adaptation; without self-esteem, people cannot act and will break down (Becker, 1971). Self-esteem works as an anxiety-buffer making individuals feel that all is right in their world and arms them against anxiety (Becker, 1971). Self-esteem allows individuals to respond to challenges and opportunities more resourcefully and more appropriately (Brandon, 1994).

Self-esteem functions as a protective mechanism: high self-esteem protects while low self-esteem increases risks (Rutter, 1987). Low self-esteem reflects a lack of competence and lack of worthiness. Mruk (2006) states that individuals with low self-esteem "would not have much protection from the shield that self-esteem offers against the slings and arrows of life" (p. 152) and are ill-equipped at "obtaining the kinds of successes that would lead to a sense of competence" (p. 153). On the other hand, individuals with high self-esteem tend to demonstrate a positive degree of competence, worthiness, feel good about their selves, are open to new experiences, feel accepted and acceptable, are pleasant to be around, and have skills to succeed in life (Mruk, 2006).

Developmental Outcomes of Resilience

Developmental outcomes of resilience include absence of behavior problems and mastery of developmental tasks or psychosocial stages appropriate for a given age and culture, including attaining the sense of trust, autonomy, and initiative by the age of 6 (Werner, 2000). Mastery of these early developmental tasks serves as a strong and lasting protective buffer in the face of future adversity (Werner, 2000).

O'Dougherty Wright and Masten (2006) note that among minority groups in society, factors such as ethnic identity, competence and comfort in relating with members of different groups, and racial socialization are particularly important in dealing with challenges that arise due to experiences of oppression and discrimination within the context in which they live.

Currently, there is very little systematic investigation on culturally based protective factors (O'Dougherty Wright & Masten, 2006). Resilience research fails to include a broad population of people by race, gender, age, and ethnicity and tends to incorrectly generalize findings to all people experiencing trauma from specific populations, which includes children (Glicken, 2006). It is crucial to expand resilience research and identify specific protective factors that are effective for other high risk groups such the rapidly growing biracial population.

Chapter 3 Method

Conducting biracial research in Alaska is appropriate as the state has one of the highest proportions of interracial marriages and an increasing biracial population. Alaska places second out of the fourteen states exceeding the U.S. rate of 2.4% in the two or more races population; 5.4% of the population in Alaska reported as two or more races (U.S. Census Bureau, 2001). Data for this qualitative research project were collected from demographic questionnaires, two measurements and interviews. The research data was collected during the months of November 2009 and December 2009 in Alaska. Twelve sessions were conducted in Fairbanks and four in Anchorage. The method section focuses on the participant selection procedure, research apparatus, research procedures, and data analysis.

Participants

Young biracial adults (12 women, 4 men, M_{age} = 24.5 years, age range: 18 - 29 years) participated in the study. The number and ethnic mixtures of the participants were five Black-White individuals, two Black-Latino individuals; two Korean-White individuals, one Japanese-White individual; one Chinese-White individual, one Yupik-Chinese individual, one Mexican-Chinese individual, one Tlingit-White individual, one Yupik-White individual, and one Samoan-Marshallese individual. While growing up, all participants, except for one, resided mainly in the United States, with some stationed abroad as part of a military family or participating as a foreign exchange student. The Samoan-Marshallese participant was born in America Samoa and raised in Western Samoa.

Recruitment for the study was limited to individuals with biological parents of different ethnicities, for example, one parent who is White and the other parent who is non-White such as Asian, Native American, or Hispanic. A cohort target age of 18 through 29 years was selected since they are capable to reflect, remember and communicate their experiences.

The subject selection process is as follows. Permission to conduct research using human subjects was secured from the University of Alaska Fairbanks (UAF) Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A). Recruitment flyers were posted on the UAF campus as well as public and commercial areas advertising for research subjects. The *snowball* technique was also utilized for recruitment of subjects (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). Snowballing is a method of recruiting subjects through referrals by people who have shared characteristics pertaining to the research. As an incentive to participate with the study, volunteers were offered a premium movie pass ($8.00 value) upon completion with the session. Interested volunteers were asked to contact the graduate researcher by email or telephone. Upon contact from a potential volunteer, the researcher explained the research project and determined if the individual met the research criteria.

Apparatus

The materials used included a demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B), the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (see Appendix C; Rosenberg, 1965), the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (see Appendix D; Phinney, 1992), and an interview guide which is a set of open-ended survey questions (see Appendix E).

The demographic questionnaire provided salient background information and was adapted from Mukoyama's (1998) demographic questionnaire.

The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) measured each participant's self-esteem level. Rosenberg (1965) created the RSE to measure global self-esteem. According to Rosenberg (1979), individuals with high self-esteem are characterized as having self-respect, self-worth, and while appreciating their merits and is able to recognize their faults which they hopes and expects to overcome. On the other hand, low esteem would characterize an individual who lacks self-respect and self-worth, and feels inadequate or seriously deficient.

The RSE is considered a unidimensional measure of self-esteem (Blascovich & Tomaka, 1991; Wylie, 1989) and measures an overall feeling of self-respect or self-acceptance. It is considered the standard against which other self-esteem measures are compared. The instrument has ten items based on the Likert scale with items answered on a four point scale, "1" indicates strongly agree to "4" as strongly disagree. The RSE is composed of 10 items and the score results ranges from 10 to 40 with the higher scores indicating higher self-esteem.

The Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) provided a measure of the subjects' ethnic identity level of their respective ethnicities. Ethnic identity refers to the sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group and plays an important role in the development of self-identity in ethnic minority individuals. A person can attach positive or negative attitude toward their ethnic heritage and so ethnic identity is a strong predictor of self-esteem. The MEIM was utilized to assess the level of ethnic identity of

participants. The possible overall scores for the MEIM range from 1 to 4; 1 as having very low ethnic identity to 4 as having very high ethnic identity.

The set of interview questions were open-ended allowing participants to include details and themes that may otherwise be missed or overlooked with closed ended questions (McCracken, 1988). The interview incorporated questions used in other studies related to biracial identity research (Adermann, 2000; Cruz-Janzen, 1997; Kerwin et al., 1993). Kerwin et al. (1993) designed the Racial Identity in Biracial Children Interview Guide, based on McCracken's (1988) Long Interview model, to interview biracial (Black-White) children and their parents. Cruz-Janzen (1997) adapted this guide and added new categories such as the socialization agents and cultural accommodations. The interview questions also incorporated some of Adermann's (2000) interview guide questions.

A comparison was made to determine similarities and differences of factors that may affect the self-esteem and ethnic identities levels of all participants and also between the Minority-White and Minority-Minority groups. The interview answers were also analyzed for any consistent themes, relationships and identifying protective factors contributing toward psychosocial resilience leading to a positive identity.

Procedures

Participants were individually tested and interviewed by the researcher. Meeting arrangements were made and conducted in a comfortable setting conducive for interviewing and at a time convenient for the participant. The same procedure was followed with all participants. Participants were informed that their participation was

strictly voluntary and they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. Their identity would remain confidential at all times and would not be disclosed in any way and at any time. At the beginning of the interview, volunteers were provided with a written informed consent form for signature and were also given a copy of the unsigned informed consent form for their records.

Next, participants were asked to complete the RSE, the MEIM and the demographic questionnaire; this portion took about 10 minutes. The recorded interview followed and this portion lasted between 45 minutes to an hour and 30 minutes. The total time for each meeting lasted between 1 to 2 hours per participant. At the end of the interview, each participant was thanked for volunteering and given a premium movie pass.

To maintain anonymity, participants' names were not used during the taping of the interviews. Interview recordings were transcribed by a third party; confidentiality was maintained by coding each participant's interview with a number. The researcher scored all the tests, reviewed and analyzed the data collected.

Data Analysis

The researcher compared the results of the RSE and MEIM with information from the demographic information and the interview transcripts to identify common factors, themes, and patterns. During the final analysis, the measurements scores were reviewed and the transcriptions were reread carefully to recheck accuracy of the identified themes and patterns of protective factors and resilience.

Chapter 4 Results

For qualitative research involving long interviews, eight respondents are normally sufficient to provide a glimpse into the complicated character, organization, and logic of culture (McCracken, 1988). The original intent of this research project was to compare data and themes between individuals of biracial groups projected with eight Minority-White heritage and eight Minority-Minority heritage for a total of sixteen participants. However, due to the recruitment process of self-selection for volunteers, there were not an equal number of individuals for each group. The final pool consisted of eleven individuals in the Minority-White group and five individuals in the Minority-Minority group. Therefore, the researcher combined data between both groups to conduct an overall analysis of all participants. A comparison was also conducted between these groups and significant emerging trends are presented.

Some technical difficulties occurred with the digital recordings. A minor portion of one participant's interview did not record properly and could not be transcribed. However, the interviewer utilized notes written after the interview as part of the data analysis. Also, a few recorded words could not be deciphered for the transcriptions, but these missing words did not alter the quality and meaning of the participants' interview answers.

The qualitative research explored for protective factors fostering psychosocial resilience promoting a positive self-identity development in biracial youth. The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE) was used to measure self-esteem levels and the Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure (MEIM) was used to assess ethnic identity levels.

The written demographic questionnaire provided background information of participants. The interviews enabled the researcher to gain in-depth information of participants' feelings, experiences and stories about being biracial.

A comparison between the results from the RSE and the MEIM combined with the questionnaire data and interview answers were analyzed for themes and relationships in identifying protective factors building psychosocial resilience. Rankings from the RSE and MEIM were separately compared with salient individual, family and social factors influencing self-esteem and ethnic identity. Comparisons were also made between the RSE rankings and MEIM rankings to expose and explore any possible trend between self-esteem and ethnic identity levels.

The results will be presented in the following order: first, the RSE (self-esteem) data comparison; second, the MEIM (ethnic identity) data comparison; third, the comparison between the self-esteem scale ranking and ethnic identity measurement levels; fourth, common factors identified among those scoring above the mean on the self-esteem scale; and conclude with a list of identified potential risk factors.

Self-Esteem Ranking and Data Comparison

The possible scores for the RSE range from 10 to 40. Higher scores correspond with higher self-esteem. Overall RSE scores (see Table 1) for the sixteen participants ranged from 28 to 39 ($M = 31.8$). Seven participants scored higher than the self-esteem mean.

Heritage and parents' heritage. Four of the six participants with an Asian ethnic mixture scored above the mean and had the highest self-esteem scores (see Table 1). Nine participants scored below the mean. Four of the five participants with an ethnic mixture of Black-White were among this group, with three having the lowest scores. Also, participants with mothers of Black heritage had higher scores compared to their counterparts whose mothers were non-Black (White or Latino). The three participants with White mothers and Black fathers had the lowest self-esteem scores.

First generation parents. The majority of participants with a parent who had emigrated to the United States from another country, the first generation, tended to score above the mean (see Table 1). Five of the sixteen participants had a first generation parent. The three participants with the top self-esteem scores had parents from Asia. The self-esteem score for the participant with the first generation Latino (Panama) mother was just below the mean and the participant with the first generation White (German) mother had the lowest self-esteem score.

Table 1

Self-Esteem, Heritage, Parents' Heritage and Generation to United States

Rank	RSE	ID	G	Age	Heritage	Mother	Father
1	39	A4	F	28	Korean-White	**Korean**	White
2	35	B1	M	18	Yupik-Chinese	Yupik	**Chinese**
3	34	A6	F	29	Korean-White	**Korean**	White
3	34	A9	M	29	Japanese-White	Japanese	White
4	33	B4	F	28	Black-Latino	Black	Latino
5	32	A1	F	18	Black-White	Black	White
5	32	A10	F	28	Tlingit-White	White	Tlingit
6	31	A3	F	20	Yupik-White	Yupik	White
6	31	A5	M	25	Black-White	Black	White
6	31	B2	F	26	Black-Latino	**Latino**	Black
6	31	B3	F	20	*Samoan-Marshall*	Marshallese	Samoan
7	30	B5	M	28	Mexican-Chinese	Mexican	Chinese
7	30	A7	M	28	Chinese-White	Chinese	White
7	30	A11	F	27	Black-White	White	Black
8	29	A8	F	18	Black-White	White	Black
9	28	A2	F	22	Black-White	**White**	Black
M	31.8						

Note. Boldface = first generation in the United States; Italicized = born and raised in Samoa.

Cultural knowledge. Knowledge and adherence to cultural indices that includes language, music, history and customs are thought to be important in the development of ethnic identity (Hall & Cooke Turner, 2001). Participants who grew up with cultural knowledge tended to have higher self-esteem scores (see Table 2). Five of the seven participants in the above mean group were exposed to their culture traditions. Four of the seven from this group were exposed to the language of their minority heritage and practiced traditional customs in their homes. For the Tlingit-White participant, although

culture traditions were not practiced at home, her parents encouraged attendance and participation with Alaska Native Camp to gain knowledge of her Alaska Native heritage.

In comparison, five of the nine individuals scoring below the mean, practiced or were exposed to cultural traditions: three at home (one raised in Western Samoa) and two by visiting their extended families or through family friends.

Table 2

Self-Esteem, Self-Identity, Parental's Ethnic Identification and Cultural Knowledge

Rank	RSE	ID	Self-Identity	Parents	CK
1	39	A4	Korean-American	Korean	Y
2	35	B1	Yupik or AK Native	"Both"	Y
3	34	A6	Korean	Korean	Y
3	34	A9	Asian	"They don't"	Y
4	33	B4	Black-PR-Cuban	Black-PR-Cuban	--
5	32	A1	White & Black	"Just be me"	--
5	32	A10	Tlingit or AK Native	Mixed or AK Native	Y
6	31	A3	Yupik & White	Yupik & White	Y
6	31	A5	Black	Black	Y
6	31	B2	Latino & Black	Mother: Panamanian Father: Black	Y
6	31	B3	Samoan	"Both"	Y
7	30	B5	Mexican-Asian	"Don't know"	--
7	30	A7	American	Mother: "Unsure" Father: "American"	Y
7	30	A11	White & Black	"Mixed"	--
8	29	A8	Caucasian & Am With African Descent	Mother: None Father: Both	--
9	28	A2	German & African-Am	Black	Y
M	31.8				

Note. CK = cultural knowledge; PR = Puerto Rican; Am = American

Self-identity and parental ethnic identification. The majority of participants with culture knowledge had higher self-esteem scores and also self-identified with their assigned parental ethnic label (see Table 2). Participants were asked how they ethnically/racially identified themselves and how they thought their parents ethnically/racially identified them. Of the seven individuals scoring highest on the self-esteem measure, four identified the same as their parents' ethnic identification.

Of the nine participants scoring below the mean, three identified similarly to their parents' ethnic identification; three thought that their mother and father had a different ethnic identification from each other; one was unsure how his parents ethnically identified him; one identified more with one ethnicity while she believed her parents ethnically identified her as both though favoring their own ethnicity; and one participant identified with both her heritages of Black and German while her parents, especially her Black father, identified her as Black.

Self-identity and identification with parents. Identification with one or both parents appeared to influence self-esteem and ethnic identity (see Table 3). Participants were asked if they identified more closely with one parent than the other while growing up. The majority of participants' ethnic self-identity matched the ethnicity/race of the parent they identified with most closely. Three of the seven top scorers responded that they identified more with their mothers. The two selected their fathers because communication with their mothers were hindered, one through stroke which affected his mother's speaking abilities and the other because English was not the first language for her mother therefore she would discuss complex topics with her English speaking father.

The other two participants, who scored on the lower spectrum of this group, answered "neither" to the question. Eight of the nine scoring below the mean identified either their mother or father and one answered "neither".

Table 3

Self-Esteem, Self-Identity, Role Model and Identified with Parent

Rank	RSE	ID	Self-Identity	Role Model	Identified
1	39	A4	Korean-American	Mother	Father
2	35	B1	Yupik or AK Native	Mother	Mother
3	34	A6	Korean	Mother	Mother
3	34	A9	Asian	Mother	Father
4	33	B4	Black-PR-Cuban	Mother	Mother
5	32	A1	White & Black	Mother/Father	Neither
5	32	A10	Tlingit or AK Native	Father	Neither
6	31	A3	Yupik & White	School Teacher	Mother
6	31	A5	Black	Maternal GF	Mother
6	31	B2	Latino & Black	Mother	Mother
6	31	B3	Samoan	Nelson Mandela	Father
7	30	B5	Mexican-Asian	None	Mother
7	30	A7	American	None	Father
7	30	A11	White & Black	Mother	Mother
8	29	A8	Caucasian & Am with African Descent	Mother	Mother
9	28	A2	German & African Am	School Aide	Neither
M	31.8				

Note. PR = Puerto Rican; GF = grandfather; Am = American

Self-identity and role models. Self-esteem is boosted when parents are viewed as role models. Participants were asked to name their most influential role model. All seven participants scoring above the mean named their parents as role models (see Table 3). Five of the seven named their mothers as their role model, one said both mother and

father, and one selected her father. The self-identity of the six selecting a single parent as a role model included the ethnicity of the selected parent.

In comparison with the other nine counterparts, three participants selected their mother, one his maternal grandfather, one an elementary school aide, one a high school teacher, one named Nelson Mandela as their role model, while two participants stated they had no role models.

Ethnic Identity Levels and Data Comparison

Ethnic identity refers to the sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group and plays an important role in the identity development in ethnic minority individuals. The possible scores for the MEIM range from 1 to 4, with 1 as very low to 4 for very high. Participants' overall scores ranged from 2.08 to 3.5 ($M = 2.94$; see Table 4). Nine participants scored higher than the mean.

Heritage and parents' heritage. Those with Asian heritage, first generation parents and of Minority-Minority heritage tended to have higher ethnic identity level scores (see Table 4). Four of the five Minority-Minority participants scored higher than the mean. Five of the six participants with Asian heritage scored above the mean.

First generation parents. All participants with a first generation American parent scored above the mean (see Table 4).

Table 4

Ethnic Identity, Heritage, Parents' Heritage and Generation to United States

Rank	MEIM	ID#	Heritage	Mother	Father
1	3.5	B2	Latino-Black	**Latino**	Black
2	3.41	A5	Black-White	Black	White
3	3.33	B3	Samoan-Marshallese	Marshallese	Samoan
4	3.17	B5	Mexican-Asian	Mexican	Asian
5	3.16	A6	Korean-White	**Korean**	White
5	3.16	A2	Black-White	**White**	Black
6	3.08	A4	Korean-White	**Korean**	White
6	3.08	B1	Yupik-Chinese	Yupik	**Chinese**
7	3.0	A9	Japanese-White	Japanese	White
8	2.92	A11	Black-White	White	Black
9	2.83	A7	Chinese-White	Chinese	White
10	2.75	A10	Tlingit-White	White	Tlingit
11	2.66	A3	Yupik-White	Yupik	White
12	2.58	B4	Black-Latino	Black	Latino
13	2.33	A8	Black-White	White	Black
14	2.08	A1	Black-White	White	Black
M	2.94				

Note. Boldface = first generation to the United States.

The scores for Minority-White group ranged from 2.08 to 3.41 ($M = 2.85$; see Table 5). Six participants scored higher than this mean. In comparison, the Minority-Minority group had a higher score range and mean than the Minority-White group and overall group. The Minority-Minority scores ranged from 2.58 to 3.5 ($M = 3.13$; see Table 6).

Table 5

Minority-White Ethnic Identity, Heritage and Parents' Heritage

Rank	MEIM	ID	Heritage	Mother	Father
1	3.41	A5	Black-White	Black	White
2	3.16	A6	Korean-White	**Korean**	White
2	3.16	A2	Black-White	**White**	Black
3	3.08	A4	Korean-White	**Korean**	White
4	3.0	A9	Japanese-White	Japanese	White
5	2.92	A11	Black-White	White	Black
6	2.83	A7	Chinese-White	Chinese	White
7	2.75	A10	Tlingit-White	White	Tlingit
8	2.66	A3	Yupik-White	Yupik	White
9	2.33	A8	Black-White	White	Black
10	2.08	A1	Black-White	Black	White
M	2.85				

Note. Boldface = first generation to United States.

Table 6

Minority-Minority Ethnic Identity, Heritage and Parents' Heritage

Rank	MEIM	ID	Heritage	Mother	Father
1	3.5	B2	Black-Latino	**Latino**	Black
2	3.33	B3	Samoan-Marshallese	Marshallese	Samoan
3	3.17	B5	Mexican-Asian	Mexican	Chinese
4	3.08	B1	Yupik-Chinese	Yupik	**Chinese**
5	2.58	B4	Black-Puerto Rican-Cuban	Black	Latino
M	3.13				

Note. Boldface = first generation to United States.

Culture knowledge. Exposure to cultural traditions and ethnic language appears to strongly influence ethnic identity levels. Eight of the nine participants scoring above the MEIM mean were in families who practiced or were exposed to their cultural traditions and ethnic languages in their homes (see Table 7). Four of the five with Asian ancestry were in this group. On the other hand, three of the seven participants whose scores were below the MEIM mean gained culture knowledge through their extended family or at Alaska Native Camp.

Table 7

Ethnic Identity, Self-Identity, Parental Ethnic Identification and Cultural Knowledge

Rank	MEIM	ID	Self-Identity	Parent's	CK
1	3.5	B2	Latino & Black	Mother: Panamanian Father: Black	Y
2	3.41	A5	Black	Black	Y
3	3.33	B3	Samoan	"Both"	Y
4	3.17	B5	Mexican-Asian	"Don't know"	--
5	3.16	A6	Korean	Korean	Y
5	3.16	A2	German & African-Am	Black	Y
6	3.08	A4	Korean-American	Korean	Y
6	3.08	B1	Yupik or AK Native	Yupik & Chinese	Y
7	3.0	A9	Asian	"They don't"	Y
8	2.92	A11	White & Black	"Mixed"	--
9	2.83	A7	American	Father: "American" Mother: "Unsure"	Y
10	2.75	A10	Tlingit or AK Native	"Mixed" "Alaska Native"	Y
11	2.66	A3	Yupik & White	Yupik-White	Y
12	2.58	B4	Black-PR-Cuban	Black-PR-Cuban	--
13	2.33	A8	Caucasian & Am with African descent	Mother: "None" Father: "Both"	--
14	2.08	A1	White & Black	"Just be me"	--
M	2.94				

Note. CK = cultural knowledge; Am = American; PR = Puerto Rican

Self-identity and parental ethnic identification. No substantial patterns emerged with the comparison of the overall ethnic identity level ranking and participants' ethnic self-identity and parental ethnic identification labels (see Table 7). However, the separate scores of the Minority-White (see Table 8) and Minority-Minority groups (see Table 9) exposed a noticeable trend.

As a group, the Minority-Minority cohorts scored a higher range, 2.58 to 3.5 (M = 3.13) than the Minority-White cohorts. The Minority-White scores ranged from 2.08 to 3.41 (M = 2.85).

Those in the Minority-White group with the higher mean tended to identify with their parent's ethnic labels compared their Minority-White cohorts scoring below the mean. Four of the six Minority-White participants with higher mean scores, ethnically/racially identified the same as their parents' labels for them. Of the remaining two, one participant, whose parents identified her as Black, identified herself as German and African American and the other participant stated that his parents did not use ethnic labels for him.

For the five Minority-White participants that scored below the mean, two participants identified the same as their parents' labels; two participants had parents who used different ethnic labels from each other; the participant with the lowest MEIM score in this group stated that her parents' wanted her to "just be me."

Table 8

Minority-White Ethnic Identity, Self-Identity, Parental Ethnic Identification and Cultural Knowledge

Rank	MEIM	ID	Self-Identity	Parental	CK
1	3.41	A5	Black	Black	Y
2	3.16	A6	Korean	Korean	Y
2	3.16	A2	German & African Am	Black	Y
3	3.08	A4	Korean	Korean	Y
4	3.0	A9	Asian	"They don't"	Y
5	2.92	A11	White & Black	"Mixed"	--
6	2.83	A7	American	Mother: "Unsure" Father: American	Y
7	2.75	A10	Tlingit	"Mixed" and AK Native	Y
8	2.66	A3	Yupik &White	Yupik-White	Y
9	2.33	A8	Caucasian & Am with African Descent	Mother: "None" Father: "Both"	--
10	2.08	A1	White-Black	"Just be me"	--
M	2.85				

Note. CK = Cultural Knowledge; Am = American.

Table 9

Minority-Minority Ethnic Identity, Self-Identity, Parental Ethnic Identification and Cultural Knowledge

Rank	MEIM	ID	Self-Identity	Parental	CK
1	3.5	B2	Latino-Black	Mother: Panamanian Father: Black	Y
2	3.33	B3	Samoan	"Both"	Y
3	3.17	B5	Mexican-Asian	"Don't know"	--
4	3.08	B1	Yupik or Alaska Native	Both	Y
5	2.58	B4	Black-PR-Cuban	Black-PR-Cuban	--
M	3.13				

Note. CK = Cultural Knowledge; PR = Puerto Rican.

Self-identity and identification with parents. Eight of the nine participants scoring above the ethnic identity mean identified more with one parent while one did not identify more with either parent (see Table 10). Five of the seven participants scoring below the mean identified more with one of their parents while two did not identify more with either parent.

Self-identity and role models. Six of the nine participants scoring above the mean (see Table 10) named their mothers or another family as role models, one named an elementary school aide, one Nelson Mandela, and one did not name a role model. Six of the seven participants scoring below the mean selected one or both of their parents as role models and one had no role model.

Table 10

Ethnic Identity, Self-Identity, Role Model and Identified with Parent

Rank	MEIM	ID	Self-identity	Role Model	Identified
1	3.5	B2	Latino-Black	Mother	Mother
2	3.41	A5	Black	Grandfather	Mother
3	3.33	B3	Samoan	Nelson Mandela	Father
4	3.17	B5	Mexican-Asian	None	Mother
5	3.16	A6	Korean	Mother	Mother
5	3.16	A2	German-African Am	School Aide	Neither
6	3.08	A4	Korean-American	Mother	Father
6	3.08	B1	Yupik or AK Native	Mother	Mother
7	3.0	A9	Asian	Mother	Father
8	2.92	A11	White-Black	Mother	Mother
9	2.83	A7	American	None	Father
10	2.75	A10	Tlingit or AK Native	Father	Neither
11	2.66	A3	Yupik-White	Mother	Mother
12	2.58	B4	Black-PR-Cuban	Mother	Mother
13	2.33	A8	Caucasian & Am with African descent	Mother	Mother
14	2.08	A1	White & Black	Mother/Father	Neither
M	2.94				

Note. Am = American; PR = Puerto Rican.

Comparison Between Self-Esteem Ranking and Ethnic Identity Levels

Self-esteem ranking. Participants' self-esteem scores were ranked from the highest to the lowest (see Table 11) and their corresponding ethnic identity level listed on the next column. Participants with the top four self-esteem scores also scored above the ethnic identity measurement mean. Another cluster of participants with high ethnic identity scores had self-esteem scores of 31 and 30 which are very to close the RSE mean (31.8).

Table 11

Self-Esteem Ranking with Ethnic Identity Score

Rank	ID	RSE	MEIM	Heritage
1	A4	**39**	**3.08**	Korean-White
2	B1	**35**	**3.08**	Yupik-Chinese
3	A6	**34**	**3.16**	Korean-White
3	A9	**34**	**3.0**	Japanese-White
4	B4	**33**	2.58	Black-Latino
5	A1	**32**	2.08	Black-White
5	A10	**32**	2.75	Tlingit-White
6	A3	31	2.66	Yupik-White
6	A5	31	**3.41**	Black-White
6	B2	31	**3.5**	Black-Latino
6	B3	31	**3.33**	Samoan-Marshallese
7	B5	30	**3.17**	Mexican-Chinese
7	A7	30	2.83	Chinese-White
7	A11	30	2.92	Black-White
8	A8	29	2.33	Black-White
9	A2	28	**3.16**	Black-White
M		31.8	2.94	

Note. Boldface = above the mean.

Ethnic identity levels. Participants' ethnic identity scores were ranked from highest to lowest (see Table 12) with their corresponding self-esteem scores listed in the next column. Four of the seven participants scoring above the self-esteem mean also scored above the ethnic identity mean.

Table 12

Ethnic Identity Ranking with Self-Esteem Scores

Rank	ID	MEIM	RSE	Heritage
1	B2	**3.5**	31	Black-Latino
2	A5	**3.41**	31	Black-White
3	B3	**3.33**	31	Samoan-Marshallese
4	B5	**3.17**	30	Mexican-Chinese
5	A6	**3.16**	**34**	Korean-White
5	A2	**3.16**	28	German/Black
6	A4	**3.08**	**39**	Korean-White
6	B1	**3.08**	**35**	Yupik-Chinese
7	A9	**3.0**	**34**	Japanese-White
8	A11	2.92	30	White & Black
9	A7	2.83	30	Chinese-White
10	A10	2.75	**32**	Tlingit-White
11	A3	2.66	31	Yupik-White
12	B4	2.58	**33**	Black-Latino
13	A8	2.33	29	Black-White
14	A1	2.08	**32**	Black-White
M		2.94	31.8	

Note. Boldface = above the mean.

Identified Protective Factors

The interview transcripts and demographic questionnaire were utilized to find common factors among the seven who scored above the mean in the self-esteem measures. Specific factors that appear to contribute toward a positive biracial identity development fostering higher self-esteem are described below.

Personal Factors

Ethnic mixture. The ethnic mixture of the biracial individuals appeared to impact self-esteem and identity development. Five of the seven participants scoring above the self-esteem mean were of the Minority-White group.

Ethnic heritage. Participants with Asian heritage tended to have higher self-esteem scores. The top four self-esteem scores were Asian heritage while those with African American heritage tended to score lower on the self-esteem measure. Five of the nine scoring below the mean included African American heritage. Participants with Black mothers scored higher in self-esteem than participants with White mothers.

Identity Factors

Positive and consistent labels from parents. Participants whose parents provided labels that were non-ambiguous, positive or recognizing the child's ethnicity scored above the self-esteem mean. Participants whose mother and father assigned a different ethnic identification scored below the mean. Participants who were unsure how their parents' ethnically identified them also scored below the mean.

Parental ethnic identity assignment. Participants were accepting of their parent's ethnic identity assignment. Responses included, "It's normal that I'm considered both"; "I was okay with that. I kind of understood"; "I think it actually gave me a benefit, whereas I don't see the world through a colored lens"; "I think it's good…it's comprehensive, it's representative"; "I think it was a good way to raise me," and "I think it's just fine."

Identification with parents. Participants who were able to identify with parents were a common factor. Of the seven scoring highest on the self-esteem measure, three identified more with their mother and two with their fathers. The other two said they did not identify more with one parent over the other.

Coping Skills

Ethnic identity discrepancy management. None of the participants felt pressured to accept an ethnic identity assigned by other people. Participant comments included, "Pressure? No"; "Not at all. I'm very strong in the way I see myself"; "Not really. I know who I am and...their perception of me is not going to change"; "No, not really, I don't really view that as a problem"; "No because I am not just White...I want people to know that I am both."

When asked how they deal with this discrepancy, most choose to ignore it: "I just kind of think they're ignorant"; "Sometimes, I just let them, because I would rather not deal with them"; "I just keep my mouth shut about it"; "No, I don't really mind what other people think." One participant said she was willing to discuss it "if they want to talk or not...I'll let you assume whatever you want to, but if you really want to know me and...relate to these situations, then let's engage in some dialogue."

Identity fluctuation. Five of the seven scoring above the self-esteem mean said that their ethnic identity adapts according to particular social situations. The two Korean-White participants making cultural accommodations when they are around Korean people with expected behaviors that are culturally appropriate, by becoming more reserved and speaking Korean. The Japanese-White participant stated that "it fluctuates...usually when folks meet me. I'll put on persona and just like all relationships, they change and develop." The Black-White participant stated "when I was younger...in middle school...wore African American style clothing...whenever I wore that kind of stuff...the black kids would be a little more friendly towards me." The Black-Latino participant

stated "if I'm with a Black friend, I'm willing to explore what that identity means or how I engage with them based on those characteristics..." The Yupik-Chinese participant and the Tlingit-White participant both said their ethnic identity did not fluctuate in varying social situations.

Family Factors

First generation parent. Having a parent who is first generation to the United States may be a factor that contributes to self-esteem. Three participants scoring the highest self-esteem scores had a parent who was the first generation to the United States.

Parents as role models. All participants scoring above the self-esteem mean selected their mother or father as a role model and found their parents accessible to discuss ethnic identity matters. One participant stated "my parents probably have the largest influence because they're my parents...based on their just being them. The racial aspect would be my parents just the way they carry themselves and show they can be strong." Another participant stated "Probably my mom and it's just the kind of way I understand the world, relate to the world, understand human behavior...If we decided to go and explore the Spanish side of us...she was completely encouraging and open." Other comments included, "My parents definitely were my role models. I pretty much followed them and listened to what they told me because I thought they were the wisest people on the planet and they still are...they were always there to help whenever I needed them" and "Probably because most of the things I do now, and I do with my children I learned from them."

Extended family contact and acceptance. All participants had extended families and maintained some contact with them. There was a tendency to be closer to the side which they maintained more contact due to proximity or acceptance by the family. Five of the seven participants felt accepted by both their maternal and paternal extended families. Two participants felt accepted by one side of their family. One participant stated her maternal side was accepting and they did not maintain contact with their paternal side. She stated "my father doesn't like to talk to his family much because his mother...did not like my mom because she's Black." She stated, "I am closer to my mom's side because my grandma was very, very active in our lives...always sending us money...birthday cards...wanting to call us...She loved seeing us...we got to see her a lot more. I rarely ever saw anyone from my dad's side of the family."

The other participant stated that he felt accepted by his paternal side of the family and rejected by his maternal side living in Hawaii. Although, the maternal family kept in touch with Christmas cards, his maternal grandparents who were born and raised in Japan "didn't like the marriage between my mother and father. The first couple years that I went to go visit them I was kind of wayside...we were looked upon as the odd ones...so we didn't get to interact a lot with our Asian side of the family" and that "I don't think my other side of the family really enjoyed the biracial sons that were made of the relationship."

On the other hand, the participant stated "I'm closer with dad's side, being that we lived in Alabama. Most of his family is in Tennessee all the way up to Michigan...because in location I was closer to dad's side of the family" and "They all

owned farms so it didn't matter who you looked like, if you could work, you worked…at the end of the day, you had your iced tea and biscuit and communed with everyone."

Social and Community Factors

Cultural knowledge. Five of the seven participants were exposed to or practiced cultural traditions and ethnic languages. The mothers of the Korean-White participants were from Korea spoke Korean and continued with their cultural traditions in the home. One participant stated that rice was served breakfast, lunch and dinner "which is strange to most people, whereas it was normal for me" and "when you walk into someone's house they have nice tables and chairs. We had a very short table on the floor where everybody kneeled and sat and ate…You'd walk into the house, everybody's speaking Korean, there's Korean food…have Korean cable channels so could have something to watch in Korean."

Another participant raised in rural Alaska stated "it affected me immensely growing up in rural Alaska because there's mostly Alaska Natives and I see other people who are also Native every day." Both of his parents are bilingual, his mother speaks English and Yupik and his father speaks English and Mandarin. His parents enrolled him in Yupik Immersion school "because they wanted to keep the language, they wanted me to embrace and view the Yupik culture and to feel that it's part of me."

The participant whose mother had a stroke said she "stumbles along with language" and "the only way I could connect with my mother …she was a chef, so she taught me how to cook…I learned from recipe books that were passed on in her family…I got to look at who the rest of my family was…I know my mom was always

wanting me to research more about the Japanese culture and what they do and what their customs are, which I did." The family cookbooks, written in Japanese, provided some family history and his sister translated them onto tape recording; "the cookbook was not only how to tweak the stuff already written down but you'd get like how we came up with this recipe in such place and stuff...and feel closer to folks that didn't have a voice at that time."

Another participant attended Native Camp and said "it stood out because it was my first and pretty much only connection to that side of me, that race because my father, although he's full Tlingit Indian, was not raised that way because his mother and father were prosecuted for doing their religious stuff, artwork, any of the Native background that they had. So to protect their boys they did none of it and raised them as White so they don't speak the language although my grandparents did ...so Native Camp to me was a connection to a side of me that I didn't really know."

Peer acceptance. In high school, all participants felt that they were accepted by their peers and established relationships through friendships or common interest groups. Four of the seven felt they were not discriminated against. One participant stated "I don't really feel like I've ever been discriminated against." Another stated "I was raised in Anchorage where it is culturally diverse" and in schools "no one ever was treated differently." The other three stated they made friends with those who were accepting and did not judge them.

Five of the seven participants felt they were accepted by members from their ethnic groups. Two participants faced non-acceptance from members of their ethnic

group, but were accepted by their White peers. One participant stated "in middle school, not much during high school when Black kids would tell me that I'm a traitor and I'm not Black, that I'm all White and I shouldn't tell people I'm Black," but this participant was accepted and closer to her Black extended family. The other participant did not have much contact with members of Japanese heritage except for his non-accepting extended family. Growing up, he felt that his White peers accepted him more than his Black peers. He said "if you were half Asian, the White kids will accept you and pretty much get along."

Potential Risk Factors

While it is critical to identify protective factors promoting resilience, it is also necessary to recognize potential factors that may pose challenges to the development of a healthy identity. The participant data revealed factors (see Figure 1) that may increase risks for the biracial individuals and categorized by recognized common issues faced by the biracial population. Recognizing factors that may elevate the likelihood of unwanted outcomes allows applied prevention and intervention to offset negative effects and to promote resilience.

Hypodescent
Minority-Minority mixture
(e.g., Black-Korean; Black-Latino)
Minority-Minority mixture is perceived as unique
(e.g., Mexican-Chinese; Yupik-Chinese)
Minority phenotype

Stereotypes
African American heritage combination
Phenotypically recognized as an ethnic minority or biracial in the community

Fragmented
Forced choice of ethnic heritage
Parents do not provide ethnic labels
Parents not in union with ethnic label and provide separate labels to child

Justification
Socially imposed ethnic identity

Marginalization:
Non-acceptance from extended family
Non-acceptance from peers
Non-acceptance from members of same minority group
Non-acceptance from members of majority group
Lack of a role model
Lack of exposure to cultural traditions and languages
(particularly for Minority-Minority individuals with non-Black heritage)

Figure 1. Potential risk factors identified for biracial identity development.

Chapter 5 Discussion

Traditionally, behavioral science has focused upon the disease model of pathology, and is preoccupied with negative outcomes and the treatment of disorders and symptoms. Currently, the paradigm is swiftly shifting toward a wellness model of building strengths and positive outcomes. Resilience, a rapidly growing field, focuses upon identifying factors predicting successful adaptation in the face of adversity for developing effective practical application (Goldstein & Brooks, 2006). The present study adds to the literature of resilience research and supports the notion that competence and ethnic identity are important for minority individuals dealing with issues related to oppression and discrimination (O'Dougherty Wright & Masten, 2006). The research identifies protective factors fostering the development of a healthy biracial self-identity and also provides information for parents, educators, and helping professionals in assisting biracial youth navigate the tumultuous psychosocial task of adolescent identity development. The study uncovered protective factors and risk factors specific for the biracial population. These protective factors originated from ordinary magic (Masten, 2001) in everyday occurrences within personal, family, social, and peer relationships.

Protective Factors for Biracial Identity Development

Protective factors were identified among participants with high self-esteem and high ethnic identity. Ethnic heritage of individuals, parental factors, and cultural knowledge appear to affect self-esteem and identity development.

Personal Factors
Ethnic Mixture
(e.g., Minority-White mixture)
Ethnic Heritage
(e.g., Asian heritage mixture)
Positive attitude of ethnic heritages
Positive ethnic identity discrepancy management
Identity Fluctuation or shifting ability in social situations

Parents and Family Factors
Positive labels from parents
Consistent labels from parents
Identifying with parents
First generation parent
(i.e., parent who emigrated to the United States)
Parents as role models
Parents provide cultural knowledge
Acceptance from extended family
Positive contact with extended family

Social and Community Factors
Cultural knowledge learned in the schools
Cultural knowledge experienced through community programs
Peer acceptance
Positive role models in schools and community

Figure 2. Protective factors identified for biracial identity development.

Ethnic heritage appeared to be a factor affecting levels of self-esteem among the participants. Individuals with an Asian mixture tended to score higher on the self-esteem scale while those with African American mixture scored among the lower ranking. An explanation for this discrepancy may be due to racial attitudes displayed through stereotypes of Asian Americans and African Americans. While, in general, stereotypes of Asian Americans tend to be positive, African American people are unfairly stereotyped

negatively. One Asian participant spoke of his experience regarding stereotypes. He asked his White father why some students constantly looked at his math tests. His father explained the other students were viewing his answers because Asian people are supposed to be good at math. Another Asian participant shared that she "always kind of thought that I should always be smart because my mother's Korean, because of stereotype of Asians is that they're all educated...I always kind of felt like since I was part Asian I should be brilliant."

Another explanation for the difference in self-esteem scores may be gleaned from racial identity studies regarding skin color bias. Perhaps due to their lighter skin, Asian-White participants may have faced less discrimination than their Black-White counterparts. Some Asian-Whites may pass for being White. For example, an Asian-White participant shared how one of her junior high instructors remarked that she looked like her dad who was White. In another incident in California, a policeman marked her race as Caucasian on her traffic ticket.

On the other hand, for Black-White individuals, skin color may pose as a risk factor. They may face rejection from their Black peers because of their lighter skin color and yet too dark to fit with the White peers. They also may face discrimination from their own family. One participant who lived in a Black majority community was always picked upon by his African American family members due to his lighter skin color. He was called "White boy this or White boy that" or "Mulatto Pina Colada." He said these prejudicial attitudes stem from the resentment in the belief that Blacks with lighter color skin have it easier than darker skin people. Due to his skin color, he was constantly

targeted for numerous unsolicited confrontations and altercations causing broken teeth and losing part of his ear. His mother told him because of his skin color he would always have a hard time.

Conversely, Asian-White individuals may be readily accepted by members of both White and Black groups while Black-White individuals may face rejection from either group. The Black-White participant raised in the South in a Black community faced constant discrimination from his Black peers because of his White heritage; he also felt he was not accepted by the White community even if his skin was lighter and because he spoke with a Black accent. In contrast, a Korean-White participant married to a Black individual from the South, visiting her in-laws, felt she was accepted into the family folds because they viewed her as Asian and ignored her White heritage. When she reminded them she was also White, they downplayed it and told her she was Asian. She felt that they would have rejected her if she were White.

Parents are a powerful factor in the development of identity and self-esteem of children. Biracial research found that parental support was related to higher self-esteem and a positive self-identity (Kawakami-Schwarber, 2003; Mukoyama, 1998). Children need support in their self-identity journey. Parents can provide support through labels. Positive labels from parents act as a guide map assisting the biracial child navigate their search of self-identity resolution. Those scoring high on the self-esteem measure was consistent with the ethnic identification shared jointly by their parents.

On the other hand, parents sending mixed signals can contribute to identity confusion. Participants receiving different ethnic labels from each of their parents scored

lower in self-esteem. Labels can be a double-edged sword; parents may condemn societal racial labels, yet not having one can be a core problem in biracial identity formation (Kerwin et al., 1993). If parents force their children to choose an ethnic identification by denying the other, this may lead to identity confusion, the inability to cope and increases stress during the developmental task of self-identification during adolescence.

Parents who do not provide labels or are not open to discussing their offspring's biracial heritage appear to place the child in a stressful state, requiring them to sort out their dual identity on their own (Kawakami-Schwarber, 2003). One participant with a lower ranked self-esteem score had supportive parents, but when it came to biracial identification, her mother just stated her name and said, "that's who you are." Upon reflection about how her parents identified her, she stated, "It was nice…I think it led to a little confusion when I was growing up and when you're a kid you gravitate toward different groups and I wasn't sure which one I fit into because there weren't very many biracial children." When faced with parental colorblindness, children are often left to navigate racial identity on their own (Samuels, 2009). If parents provide a supportive foundation and encourage their children to learn and appreciate their dual heritage, the children will have less or possibly no conflict over having to select one ethnicity or the other. This parental support builds self-esteem and develops a positive self-concept that provides a buffer in shielding adversity and stress during adolescence.

Biracial children may feel fractionalized when faced with socially imposed ethnic labels or feel forced to choose only one heritage. For most participants, the forced choice in selecting just one of their racial/ethnic identities on forms such as applications and

standardized tests brought forth feelings of confusion and fractionalization. "If I pick one, am I rejecting this or if I pick the other, I'm rejecting the other side...things like that is kind of frustrating." "I remember when I was little, I really want to be able to identify with one race, so I picked Japanese, I'll be one race...I thought that would be really cool. I guess in school I felt pulled between one or another race...if I could be a completely different race, then I wouldn't have to pick one or the other."

Self-identity, parents as role models and identification with parents appears to also influence self-esteem and ethnic identity. Participants' self-identity tended to match the ethnicity of the parent with whom they most identified and selected as a role model. Participants tended to select their mothers as the parent with who they most identified. Mothers were the family member selected as role models by almost all participants with high self-esteem compared to participants who designated a non-family member or had none. Traditionally, women are the conveyors of culture, therefore, "perhaps the ethnic mother's role is more powerful in the identification process" (Hall & Cooke Turner, 2001).

Cooke Turner's (1997) findings that Asian-White respondents tended to identify strongly with their mother's heritage and this was significant when the mother is Asian and the father is White (Hall & Cooke Turner, 2001). However, there was no substantial difference in respondents' identification when the mother is White and the father is Asian. This may explain why most of the Asian-White participants in this study tended to have a strong attachment with their Asian heritage. All had Asian mothers and White fathers.

The two Korean-White participants identified strongly with their Korean mothers and their Korean heritage. One participant felt so strongly about her Korean heritage, she considered tattooing her name in Korean somewhere on her body. "All of B. Standen's (1996) Korean-White respondents felt that being Korean was very important to them, while only 50 percent felt that being White was very important" (Hall & Cooke Turner, 2001, p. 84). This appears consistent with the Korean-White participants in the current study.

The Japanese-White participant also appeared to identify with his mother's Japanese heritage. However, the Chinese-White participant did not identify with his mother's Chinese heritage and identified more with his White father. He also self-identified as American, a label his father had given him. The participant acknowledges that he looks more White and grew up on the east coast within a White majority community. Perhaps factors such as identifying with his White father, having primarily non-Asian physical features and the location where he grew up may have influenced his ethnic identity development.

While participants with the Minority-White heritage tended to place higher on the self-esteem ranking, those with the Minority-Minority heritage also scored high on ethnic identity. As a group, the Minority-Minority participants' ethnic identity levels ranged higher than their Minority-White peers. This may be explained by the Minority-Minority individuals' experiences differing from those of the Minority-White.

Minority-Minority biracial do not have to choose between being a member of the majority or majority group because they belong to two minority groups and so their social

standing is minority (Hall & Cooke Turner, 2001). Research by "Hall (1980) and Wilson (1986) found most of their Minority-Minority respondents identifying with both minority cultures" (Hall & Cooke Turner, 2001, p. 84). This supports the notion that affirmation of ethnic identity preserves self-esteem and ethnic minority groups who have faced greater discrimination have the strongest ethnic affirmation (Kazdin, 2000).

Participants with parents who were the first generation emigrating to the United States also scored high on ethnic identity. This may tie in with the cultural knowledge factor. First generation parents are most likely to provide their children intimate experience and constant exposure to their ethnic heritage language, customs and values.

Cultural knowledge appears to elevate levels of self-esteem and ethnic identity. Perhaps learning and understanding the history, traditions and language of one's culture develops an affirmation and sense of pride of belonging to that culture. A participant who was rejected by his Japanese extended family gained his culture knowledge through his Japanese-American mother's urging to learn about the Japanese history and culture on his own. He stated that he relates to his Japanese culture, but not to his Japanese family.

Comparisons between the self-esteem ranking and ethnic identity levels show some trends. Participants with high self-esteem also had high ethnic identity scores. It appears that stronger ethnic identification appear to boost self-esteem.

Participants with high ethnic identity levels may not have highest self-esteem scores, but tended to cluster around the self-esteem mean. This appears to support the notion that ethnic identity is an important part of self-concept. Those with high self-concept will have higher self-esteem.

On the other hand, having lower ethnic identity levels does not necessarily equate to lower self-esteem. Three participants scoring above the self-esteem mean scored below the ethnic identity mean. An explanation for this may be found in the racial socialization of the participants who were raised culturally White. Therefore they may not have as strong an ethnic attachment to their minority ethnicities as those who were raised with culture knowledge. One of the participants, a Black-Latino woman stated that her social construct is White since she grew up with Whites. She also stated that those closest to her identify her as the "Whitest Black person they'd ever known." The other participant with a Black-White heritage stated that she never actually had any Black friends and "Black's not a style, it's a culture." She went on to say, "African American culture is different from African culture. I'm not African American, I'm African." The other participant of Tlingit-White heritage stated that she "looks very White" and was raised White. Although her father is full Tlingit Indian, he was raised without cultural traditions to avoid the persecution that her Native grandparents had faced for practicing their cultural traditions.

Additional Protective Factors

Along with the factors discussed above, additional protective factors were identified in the personal characteristics such as coping skills and factors from family, social, and peer environments.

Biracial individuals are constantly challenged to justify their existence and subjected to socially imposed identities. The participants demonstrated positive personal self-perceptions and ability to regulate emotional arousal and impulses when faced with

ethnic identity discrepancies. They did not feel pressured to accept the incorrect racial assignments and dealt with these discrepancies in socially accepted manners.

Also, most participants adapted their identity to fit the social situations such as displaying appropriate culturally-based behavior for the particular ethnic group they are interacting with. This implies personal characteristics of good cognitive abilities, attention skills and adaptive personality.

Acceptance by extended families provides a security of belonging and a sense of fitting in. Contacts with accepting family members provide opportunity and experiences to explore their heritage intimately and in a safe environment.

Peer acceptance played an important part of the identity development process of discovering where an individual fits in society. Peer acceptance is critical during adolescence. Friends provide emotional and social support. Also friendship with someone of similar heritage mixture allowed participants to share experiences about being biracial and brings a sense of normalization.

Risk Factors and Resilience

While it is important to identify protective factors to promote positive identity development, it is also essential to recognize factors and conditions that may pose as risk. Recognition of possible risk factors brings awareness for building and advancing protective factors to increase resilience for positive adjustments in the face of future adversities and stress. All participants had exposure to risk factors and it appeared that protective factors provided resilience to counteract or provided enhanced competence when faced with adversity.

A comparison of two participants sharing risk factors of Minority-Minority and of a unique heritage mixture along with their protective factors is presented to illustrate the effects of resilience. The Mexican-Chinese individual and the Yupik-Chinese individual both acknowledged that they have never met anyone outside of their families with their specific respective ethnic combinations. The Yupik-Chinese individual scored high on self-esteem and ethnic identity level, while the Mexican-Chinese individual scored below the self-esteem mean, but high on the ethnic identity level.

It appears that the Mexican-Chinese individual had a much more difficult period during adolescent with his biracial identity development than his Yupik-Chinese cohort. The Mexican-Chinese participant lived in a White community and stated "in high school there was probably a few half Alaskan/White, Black and White mixed, but nothing like me." He was the youngest of three boys and his parents tended not to discuss ethnic issues with him because "being the last one, they were kind of worn out from the first two" and "they just kind of...let me grow up by myself I guess." His parents had not provided an ethnic identification label for him.

He stated that "high school wasn't that good" and "I played football and wrestled so I hung out with enough people, like I was around enough people not to be antisocial, you know. But there's a lot of my friends that would make racial jokes around me, all the time....there were a couple of guys that I hung out with that would not shut up about it no matter what I said. I didn't want to get in a fight with those guys because they were part of my circle of friends. Even though everybody knew it wasn't right, they just did it

because it was a joke." He said they would call him "Spink. With Chinese. Like Chink and Spic...They'd get real creative."

This individual had protective factors in place including a good regulation of emotional arousal and control, close relationships with his two protective older brothers whom he could discuss ethnic identity and biracial issues with, and a best friend. He said when he was around 21 or 22 years old, he began to realize the importance of his cultural background. "I noticed that everybody else that is of one race, they're proud of what they are. I wanted to know about me because I didn't get that from my parents." Now at 28, he said, "I'm the only one of me besides my brothers that exists and I think that's really cool. I'm really proud of that fact...a lot of it was me figuring it out. It wasn't anyone else helping me with it, my parents or anybody really."

In comparison, the Yupik-Chinese individual had derived many protective factors from parental and social sources. He was raised in a Yupik majority community in Alaska and with other biracial children with Alaska Native heritage. His parents acknowledged both his heritages and said "my parents were very good in sheltering me" from discrimination and not showing me the bad side of being discriminated against [because of] my heritage and culture." He identified closely with his Yupik mother, Yupik culture and his Chinese father was very interested in his son's education. He attended schools such as a Yupik Immersion school where traditional values and language were taught and later attended Mount Edgecumbe High School in Sitka, Alaska that provides services to students from Alaska's rural areas. Although his high school teachers were White, they were very supportive of Alaska Native cultures and traditions.

He remembers that in elementary school, the children would tease him about his Chinese last name since it was different, but he said, "I never really was affected by it. I didn't think of it as something that was negative." When faced with a discrepancy with his ethnic identity, he states "I don't really mind what other people think." At age eighteen, this young man stated of his ethnic identity that he is "definitely clear, like 100 percent who I am...committed to it. Yes I'm not going to change." This participant appeared to have an easier transition during adolescence and with his biracial identity resolution compared to his Mexican-Chinese counterpart.

The comparison of the two Minority-Minority participants suggests that the amount and accumulation of protective factors may offset the harmful effects of adversity and improves positive adjustment. The Mexican-Chinese participant appeared to have a challenging adolescent period while navigating his biracial identity on his own. He did not have the parental support for his biracial identity development and was not exposed to cultural knowledge; he was fortified with less protective factors making his journey to a healthy biracial identity resolution much more difficult. Numerous protective factors and cultural knowledge appear to have contributed to the Yupik-Chinese participant's resilience and to allow an easier transition toward achieving a healthy biracial identity resolution.

Implications

The psychosocial task of identity development is universal, while variances exist in personal attributes, cultural and ecological dimensions. The findings illustrate and support Hall and Cooke Turner's (2001) observations that the biracial population is not

homogeneous, but rather is heterogeneous. The life experiences of Minority-White and Minority-Minority members differ depending on their background. Further, experiences vary for those within the Minority-White and Minority-Minority groups. For example, an Asian-White individual's experience would likely differ from the experience of a Black-White individual's. A Black-Latino individual's experience would also likely differ from the experience of an Alaska Native-Asian individual's. The research improves our understanding of the complex nature of the biracial identity development process and the influences of developmental, cultural, and ecological dynamics upon this development.

Psychosocial development, biracial identity development and resilience are intertwined. Resilience refers to the "positive outcomes, adaptation, or the attainment of developmental milestones or competencies in the face of significant risk, adversity, or stress" (Naglieri & LeBuffe, 2006, p. 108). Longitudinal studies in resilience of at-risk children found that mastery of early developmental tasks tended to serve as a strong and lasting buffer when facing future adversity (Egeland, Carison, & Sroufe, 1993; Werner, 2000; Werner & Smith, 1992). Hence, biracial youths equipped with protective factors are able to successfully progress through each developmental stage and throughout adulthood.

The findings indicated support of psychosocial resilience fostering a healthy biracial identity resolution. A healthy identity can be achieved through the successful progression of developmental stages with social and ecological forces influencing identity development. Ecological factors from family, peers and social sources affect the successful progression of identity development. Participants with protective factors

provided through parents and family progressed through the early developmental stages of an unexamined ethnic identity to the next stage of becoming aware of racial differences and connotations attached to ethnic groups. Middle school appeared to be the most challenging stage for participants as they faced the identity developmental tasks of figuring out the answers to "Who am I?" and "Where do I fit in?" Protective factors such as relationships with close peers and participating peers in similar interests through activities such clubs and sports added an additional buffer and created an easier transition during this period.

As adults, all participants had positive outcomes with their identity development; they stated that they felt secure with their personal identities and committed to their current identity. The majority of participants expressed interest in becoming more familiar with their ethnic heritages by learning the language and visiting the country. Those who planned to have children, expressed they planned to encourage and practice cultural knowledge with their own children. This demonstrates resilience in the making for future generations of biracial or multiracial individuals.

Practical Applications

The research has practical and applicable implications for parents, educators and counselors for assisting the biracial youth population. A primary goal is fostering psychosocial resilience by providing protective factors to ease ethnic identity conflicts through self-esteem, self-efficacy and competence. A framework for building resilience in children includes promoting strengths to cope with stress; promoting parenting practices that enable children to avoid future adversities and to strengthen the child's

ability to cope effectively; promoting community and organizational changes that reduce the occurrence of adversity (Winslow, Sandler, & Wolchik, 2006).

Parents are the primary source for providing protective factors and building resilience. The home is a rich source of protective factors. Stability is provided through an organized environment with a positive family climate. Parents, who are warm, involved and have reasonable expectations foster self-esteem in their children. The following suggestions are to assist parents in helping their biracial children develop a strong sense of identity and self: to be open about racial differences and about their child's differences; be an advocate for the child; encourage positive relationships with both sides of the family; teach the child about the richness of his or her multiple heritage and about other cultures; serve as role model by surrounding yourself with other multiracial individuals and to expose the child to a variety of cultural experiences; prepare the child for the prejudice and racism that he or she may experience because of a multiracial heritage; and do not automatically assume that there are racial undercurrents to every problem that the child experiences (Looby, 2001).

Through sharing cultural knowledge, parents help support positive ethnic identity development in their children. Exposing biracial children to their ethnic languages, practicing traditional customs and providing opportunities to gain experience with a wide range of ethnic groups builds a sense of belonging and affirmation which strengthens ethnic identity. Parents who promote their children's exploration of their dual heritages, allows them freedom in choosing their identity.

Educators are another source for increasing resilience in youth. Teachers impact the development of children and contribute toward their students' positive development. "People at school can influence children's development in ways similar to competent parents" (Comer, 2002, p. 14). Two participants identified school personnel as their role models who made a difference in their lives. An elementary school aide made the extra effort for one participant to borrow books from the library because she knew this child loved to read. The other participant who was Yupik-White said her high school teacher provided support and encouragement for ethnic minority students.

Teachers can also have a negative impact. One participant said her eyes were opened when she became aware of reverse discrimination by her middle school teacher. She recalls "that one class there was only five kids that weren't Black and I remember always thinking that she was never nice to any of us who weren't Black." The participant observed that "it just made me realize that it wasn't just White people that acted that way...this time it was reversed. The person being racist was the person of minority...growing up all kids were mean to each other, but this was a grownup acting this way."

Teachers can help build resilience in children by fostering healthy racial attitudes by being fair, respectful and kind. Curriculum should incorporate multicultural materials that include a diversity of ethnicities and invite people of color to share their experiences and culture with students. Most participants felt the school curriculum lacked breadth and depth as it related to diversity. On the other hand, language immersion schools provide an

opportunity for children to gain culture knowledge when it may be lacking at home or augment learning their culture and language and strengthening ethnic identity.

Professionals in the helping field, such as counselors, can assist children in building personal and social based protective factors. Counselors cannot assume that all people from specific ethnic groups are all the same and that one theoretical orientation is universally applicable in intervention (Herring, 1995). Counselors need to become knowledgeable of each ethnic heritage of their multiracial client so appropriate intervention techniques can be used to meet the client's specific situation. Children should be encouraged to identify and develop their abilities, interests, and coping mechanisms.

Counselors should encourage biracial youths to explore both sides of their heritages to assist in the formation of a positive sense of identification and ethnic identity. The client may develop a positive sense of identification with their diverse heritages. Counselors can assign "homework" such as putting together a scrapbook about their family, friends and community to concretely illustrate the diversity in their lives. Counselors can emphasize to clients the freedom to choose one's identity.

School counselors have a rich opportunity to provide guidance and provide preventive services outside the classroom. They can organize forums and clubs for youth to discuss ethnic issues with members from various ethnic groups promoting an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance within the school community.

School counselors may play an advocate role by working with teachers and the school community in building multicultural awareness and helping to establish a

foundation of acceptance of diversity. Counselors can do this by stepping outside their offices and interacting with the children and school personnel to model a respect for individual differences. Counselors can establish a positive working with teachers by consulting with them about student needs, assisting with in-classroom guidance activities, helping at parent conferences, and provide in-service training. Topics for in-service workshops could include addressing the process of helping children develop positive feelings about their racial identities, understanding the special needs of multiracial children, awareness of teachers' own prejudices and address prejudice prevention activities (Wehrly, 1996; Wright, 1998).

This study's results support the resilience concept of recognizing risk factors and seeking naturally occurring resources to help children and adolescents prevail over life's challenges and foster positive outcomes. Those displaying resilience had protective factors, including high self-esteem and self-efficacy (personal characteristics), parental support (family characteristics), and support from peers and school (social characteristics). These factors contributed toward the healthy psychosocial development and creating a buffer addressing issues related to ethnic identity and racial socialization while developing competence.

Limitations

Quantitative analysis was not conducted. The emphasis was not based on the use of statistics, but rather focused upon the quality of the experience of being biracial. The measurements were used to provide additional context to assist with identifying potential trends of protective and risk factors associated with the biracial identity development

process. The qualitative design allows the flexibility to search for interrelationships and patterns among various categories. The strength of the interview research design allows for an in-depth gathering of information, which may not otherwise be discovered in a quantitative-based design. The qualitative design fit the purpose of the study to distill and identify protective factors building resilience toward the development of positive identity in biracial individuals.

Research limitations include subject recruitment. Ideally, random selection of subjects is preferred. Subjects for this project could not be randomly selected because the study was based on a specific population. Participants were self-selecting and primarily from the University of Alaska Fairbanks population. The findings are generalizable only to the research participant pool.

Participants were given an incentive to participate by receiving a free premier movie pass for participation in the research. The question may arise whether some participants volunteered just to receive the free movie ticket and were not as reflective in their answers in comparison with those who would have participated whether or not they would receive a free gift. All volunteers appeared intrigued with the project, genuinely interested in being part of the study and participated with sincerity. Two participants tried to turn down the movie pass. Another participant, who had learned of the project from her boyfriend, was not aware of the incentive gift and was pleasantly surprised to receive the movie pass at the end of the session.

Future Directions

The findings illustrate that the biracial population is not homogeneous, but is rather diverse. Biracial research must take into account the heterogeneous nature of the population. Additional method design may consider a systematic investigation comparing the Minority-White and Minority-Minority populations, specifically focusing on various heritage mixtures and identifying factors that provide for resilience for these populations. To formulate effective preventive programs, it is necessary to research protective factors that are universal while distinguishing culturally-based factors specific for the biracial populations.

The results from past resilience research (O'Dougherty Wright & Masten, 2006; Werner & Smith, 2001) demonstrate that naturally occurring resources help children and adolescents prevail over life's challenges and importantly resilience appears to have long term positive effects over the lifespan. Future empirical studies could focus upon testing the effectiveness of interventions promoting resilience in the biracial youth. Designs would include reducing risks and adversities and increasing resilience.

Future studies could conduct interviews with entire families in order to gain insight of the individual experiences of each biracial sibling raised in the same household condition. Areas to study may include whether factors such as phenotype differences, personality, birth order, gender, family relationships and social conditions affect self-esteem and resilience. The study could expand to compare other families with similar heritage mixtures and non-similar heritage mixtures.

Another area to research may investigate how parental styles influence ethnic identity and self-esteem in their biracial children and how it may affect their own childrearing practices with their own multiracial children. This study briefly touched upon this area. The current study demonstrated that participants who identified more closely with one parent tended to have culture knowledge or identified with their parent's heritage. Future research may want to continue to examine how gender and ethnicity of the parent impacts ethnic identity and if it is consistent across all ethnic groups.

Additional research may want to focus upon the effects of having a first generation parent to the United States upon the biracial identity development. It may also be necessary to consider the cultural attitude of the parent's former country toward particular ethnic groups, and toward biracial persons in general and measure for patterns between levels of ethnic identity and self-esteem.

Difference in the experiences caused by gender is another fruitful area to focus in to identifying cultural and gender specific protective factors. It appears that males tend to have non-passive types of confrontation while females face verbal and passive aggression. Perhaps research in this area may identify why biracial males tend to have a high suspension rate while their female counterparts have higher incidents of delinquent acts than their monoracial peers.

The developmental process of biracial youths is dynamic due to the influences of cultural, social and ecological factors. Continuing research may reveal other essential areas useful in furthering knowledge about this complex and rapidly emergent population.

Conclusion

While resilience does not remove risks or adverse situations; it allows individuals to effectively deal with them (Rutter, 1987; Werner & Smith, 2001). This can be done through developing effective coping and adaptive skills in youth, providing a safe environment, promoting positive and competent connections and through prosocial community organizations. When biracial youths are facing risks, adversity, or stress, protective factors promote psychosocial resilience and increases positive outcomes.

Identifying culturally-based protective factors provide insights for preparing biracial youths for the major adolescent psychosocial task of identity development. Due to the biracial population's dynamic nature and unique issues, it is critical to continue resilience research to gain a better understanding in assisting this rapidly growing population. Participants' readiness to contribute their personal history provided valuable insight in this vital research field. It was gratifying that these individuals were willing to share their stories, feelings and thoughts with a stranger. Participants also appeared to enjoy the opportunity to be interviewed and share their experiences and feelings about being biracial. One found it "enlightening" as it sprang forth revelations and different perspectives of being biracial and an awareness of his own experiences compared to other members of his ethnic group.

This research brings to light the importance of resilience, identity development and promoting protective factors for the rapidly emerging biracial youth population and the necessity to expand research in this area. Increasing knowledge in psychosocial resilience allows helping professionals to develop effective tools for guidance, assist

educators to design appropriate programs, and provide parents supportive information of nurturing biracial youth for successful outcomes. Through ordinary magic, biracial youths are fortified with protective factors and sustained through a lifetime gift of resilience.

References

Aboud, E. (1987). The development of ethnic self-identification and attitudes. In J. Phinney & M. Rotheram (Eds.), *Children's ethnic socialization: Pluralism and development* (pp. 32-55). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Aboud, F. E., & Skerry, S. A. (1984). The development of ethnic attitudes: A critical review. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 15,* 3-34.

Adermann, C. Y. (2000). *A narrative approach to biracial identity development* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Indiana, PA.

Antovnosky, A. (1979). *Health, stress and coping.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Arce, C. (1981). A reconsideration of Chicano culture and identity. *Daedalus, 110*(2), 177-192.

Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. A. M. (1993). *Introduction to multicultural education.* Boston MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Becker, E. (1971). *The birth and death of meaning: An interdisciplinary perspective on the problem of man.* New York, NY: The Free Press.

Biernacki, P., & Waldorf, D. (1981). Snowball sampling: Problems and techniques of chain referral sampling. *Sociological Methods and Research, 10,* 141-163.

Blascovich, J., & Tomaka, J. (1991). Measures of self-esteem. In J. P. Robinson, P. R. Shaver, & L. S. Wrightman (Eds.), *Measures of personality and social psychological attitudes* (pp. 115-131). San Diego, CA: Academic Press.

Boesel, D., Berk, R., Groves, W. E., Eidson, B., & Rossi, P. H. (1971). White institutions *dynamics of racial and ethnic relations* (pp. 368-381). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Brand, E. S., Ruiz, R. A., & Padilla, A. A. (1974). Ethnic identification and preference: A review. *Psychology Bulletin, 81,* 860-890.

Brandon, N. (1994). *The six pillars of self-esteem.* New York, NY: Bantam.

Bronfenbrenner, U. (1979). *The ecology of human development.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Brooks, R. B. (1994). Children at risk: Fostering resilience and hope. *American Orthopsychiatric Association, Inc. 64*(4), 545-553.

Brooks, R. B. (2006). The power of parenting. In S. Goldstein & R. B. Brooks, (Eds.), *Handbook of resilience in children* (pp. 297 - 314). New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media, Inc.

Carter, R. T. (1991). Racial identity attitudes and psychological functioning. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 19,* 105-114.

Casas, J. M. (1984). Policy, training, and research in counseling psychology: The racial/ethnic minority perspectives. In S. D. Brown & R. W. Lent (Eds.), *Handbook of Counseling Psychology* (pp. 785-831). New York, NY: Wiley.

Choi, Y., Harachi, T. W., Gillmore, M. R., & Catalano, R. F. (2006). Are multiracial adolescents at greater risk?: Comparisons of rates, patterns, and correlates of substance use and violence between monoracial and multiracial adolescents. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 76*(1), 86-97.

Clark, K. B., & Clark, M. P. (1939). The development of consciousness of self and the emergence of racial identification in Negro preschool children. *Journal of Social Psychology, 10,* 591-599.

Clark, K. B., & Clark, M. P. (1940). Skin color as a factor in racial identification of Negro school children. *Journal of Social Psychology, 11,* 159-169.

Clark, K. B., & Clark, M. P. (1950). Emotional factors in racial identification and preference in Negro children. *Journal of Negro Education, 19,* 341-350.

Comer, J. (2002). Families, communities and learning environments: Integrating for children's success. In D. Douglas (Ed.), *The Early Years, The Critical Years II: The Science of Early Childhood from Birth to Eight Conference Proceedings* (pp. 14-16). Anchorage, Alaska.

Cooney, T. M., & Radina, M. E. (2000). Adjustment problems in adolescence: Are multiracial children at risk? *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 70*(4), 433-444.

Corenblum, B., & Annis, R. C. (1986). Effect of test language and experimenter race on Canadian Indian children's racial and self-identity. *Journal of Social Psychology, 126*(6), 761-773.

Corenblum, B., & Annis, R. C. (1987). Racial identity and preference in Native and White Canadian children. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science, 19*(3), 254-265.

Cross, Jr, W. E. (1971). The Negro-to-Black conversion experience: Toward a psychology of Black liberation. *Black World, 20,* 13-27.

Cross, Jr, W. E. (1995). The psychology of nigrescence: Revisiting the Cross model. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki, & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 93-122). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publication.

Cruz-Janzen, M. I. (1997). *Curriculum and the self-concept of biethnic and biracial persons.* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). University of Denver, Denver, CO.

Deater-Deckard, K., Ivy, L., & Smith, J. (2006). Resilience in gene-environment transactions. In S. Goldstein & R. B. Brooks (Eds.), *Handbook of resilience in children* (pp. 49-64). New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media, Inc.

DeBose, H. L. (2003). Introduction. In L. I. Winters & H. L. DeBose (Eds.), *New faces in a changing America: Multiracial identity in the 21st century* (pp. xi-xxi). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Egeland, B., Carison, E., & Sroufe, L. A. (1993). Resilience as a process. *Development and Psychopathology, 5,* 517-528.

Ellzey, D. (2009, October 15). JP refuses to marry couple. *Hammondstar.com.* Retrieved from http://www.hammondstar.com/articles/2009/10/15/top_stories/8847.prt

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity: Youth and crisis.* New York, NY: Norton.

George, D. M., & Hoppe, R. A. (1979). Racial identification, preference, and self-concept. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 10,* 85-100.

Gibbs, J. T. (1998). Biracial adolescents. In J. T. Gibbs & L. N. Huang (Eds.), *Children of color: Psychological interventions with culturally diverse youth* (pp. 305-332). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Glicken, M. D. (2006). *Learning from resilient people: Lessons we can apply to counseling and psychotherapy.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Goldstein, S., & Brooks, R. B. (Eds.). (2006). *Handbook of resilience in children.* New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media, Inc.

Gopaul-McNicol, S. (1988). Racial identification and racial preference of Black preschool children in New York and Trinidad. *Journal of Black Psychology, 14,* 65-68.

Hall, C. C. I., & Cooke Turner, T. I. (2001). The diversity of biracial individuals: Asian-White and Asian-minority biracial identity. In T. Williams-Leon, & C. L. Nakashima (Eds.), *The Sum of Our Parts: Mixed Heritage Asian Americans* (pp. 81-91). Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Harris, H. L. (2002). School counselors' perceptions of biracial children: A pilot study. *Professional School Counseling, 6*(2), 120-130.

Helms, J. (1985). Toward a theoretical explanation of the effects of race on counseling: A Black and White model. *The Counseling Psychology, 12,* 153-165.

Helms, J. E. (Ed.). (1990). *Black and White racial identity: Theory, research, and practice.* New York, NY: Greenwood Press.

Herring, R. D. (1995). Developing biracial ethnic identity: A review of the increasing dilemma. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 23,* 29-38.

Hetherington, E. M., & Parke, R. D. (1999). *Child psychology: A contemporary viewpoint.* Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.

Hunsberger, B. (1976). Racial awareness and preference of White and Indian children. *Canadian Journal of Behavioral Science, 10,* 176-179.

Jaffe, M. L. (1998). *Adolescence.* New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Justice stands by refusal to give interracial couple license to wed. (2009, October 17). CNN.com. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2009/US/10/17/Interracial.marriage/index.html

Kazdin, A. E. (Ed.). (2000). *Encyclopedia of psychology.* New York, NY: Oxford Press.

Kawakami-Schwarber, G. K. (2003). *Factors contributing to the development of positive self-identity in biracial youths* (Master's thesis). Available from ProQuest Dissertation and Thesis database. (UMI No. 1411706).

Kerwin, C., & Ponterotto, J. G. (1995). Biracial identity development: Theory and Research. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki, & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of Multicultural Counseling* (pp. 199-217). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Kerwin, C., Ponterotto, J. G., Jackson, B. L., & Harris, A. (1993). Racial identity in biracial children: A qualitative investigation. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 40*(2), 221-231.

Kim, J. (1981). *Processes of Asian American identity development: A study of Japanese American women's perceptions of their struggle to achieve positive identities as Americans of Asian ancestry* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from ProQuest Dissertation and Theses database. (UMI No. 8118010).

Kronenwetter, M. (1992). *United they hate: White supremacist groups in America.* New York, NY: Walker and Company.

Leask, L., Killorin, M., & Martin, S. (2001). *Trends in Alaska's people and economy.* Retrieved from Institute of Social and Economic Research, University of Alaska Anchorage website: http://www.iser.uaa.alaska.edu/Publications/Alaska2020.pdf

Levine, G., & Montero, D. (1973). Socioeconomic mobility among three generations of Japanese Americans. *Journal of Social Issues, 29,* 33-48.

Looby, E. J. (2001). Valuing human diversity: Counseling multiracial and multiethnic children. In D. S. Sandhu (Ed.), *Elementary school counseling in the new millennium.* Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Lopez, A. M. (2003). Mixed-race school-age children: A summary of Census 2000 data. *Educational Researcher, 32*(6), 25-37.

Marcia, J., Waterman, A., Matteson, D., Archer, S., & Orlofsky, J. (1993). *Ego identity: A handbook of psychosocial research.* New York, NY: Springer-Verlag.

Masten, A. S. (2001). Ordinary magic: Resilience and development. *American Psychologist, 56,* 227-238.

Masten, A. S., Hubbard, J. J., Gest, S. D., Tellegen, A., Garmezy, N., & Ramirez, M. (1999). Competence in the context of adversity: Pathways to resilience and maladaption from childhood to late adolescence. *Development and Psychopathology, 11,* 143-169.

Masten, A. S., & Reed, M. J. (2005). Resilience in development. In Snyder, C. R. & Lopez, S. J., (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 74-88). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Milan, S., & Keiley, M. K. (2000). Biracial youth and families in therapy: Issues and interventions. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy, 26*(3), 305-315.

Mruk, C. J. (2006). *Self-esteem research, theory, and practice: Toward a positive psychology of self-esteem*. New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.

Mukoyama, T. H. (1998). *Effects of heritage combination on ethnic identity, self-esteem, and adjustment among American biethnic adults* (Doctoral dissertation). Available from Dissertation Abstracts International. (UMI No. 9831033).

Naglieri, J. A., & LeBuffe, P. A. (2006). In S. Goldstein & R. B. Brooks (Eds.), *Handbook of resilience in children* (pp. 107-124). New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media, Inc.

Nakazawa, D. J. (2003). *Does anybody look else look like me?* Cambridge, MA: Perseus.

Nottingham, C. R., Rosen, D. H., & Parks, C. (1992). Psychological well-being among African-American university students. *Journal of College Student Development, 33,* 356-362.

O'Dougherty Wright, M., & Masten, A. S. (2006). Resilience processes in development: Fostering positive adaptation in the context of adversity. In S. Goldstein & R. B. Brooks (Eds.), *Handbook of resilience in children* (pp. 17-37). New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media, Inc.

Ogawa, D. (1971). *From Japs to Japanese: The evolution of Japanese American stereotypes*. Berkeley, CA: McCutchan.

Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1994). *Racial formation in the United States: From the 1960's to the 1990's*. New York, NY: Rutledge.

Pang, V. O., Mizokawa, D. T., Morishima, J. K., & Olstad, R. G. (1985). Self-concepts of Japanese-American children. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 16*(1), 99 109.

Parham, T. A., & Helms, J. E. (1985a). Attitudes of racial identity and self-esteem of Black students: An exploratory investigation. *Journal of College Student Development, 26,* 143-147.

Parham, T. A., & Helms, J. E. (1985b). Relation of racial identity attitudes to self actualization and affective states of Black students. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 32,* 421-440.

Phinney, J. S. (1990). Ethnic identity in adolescents and adults: A review of research. *Psychological Bulletin, 108,* 499-514.

Phinney, J. S. (1992). The multigroup ethnic identity measure: A new scale for use with diverse groups. *Journal of Adolescent Research, 7*(2), 156-176.

Phinney, J. S. (1996). When we talk about American ethnic groups, What do we mean? *American Psychologist, 31*(9), 918-927.

Phinney, J. S., Cantu, C. L., & Kurtz, D. A. (1997). Ethnic and American identity as predictors of self-esteem among African-American, Latino, and White adolescents. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence, 26*(2), 165-186.

Phinney, J. S., & Ong, A. D. (2007). Conceptualization and measurement of ethnic identity: Current status and future directions. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 54*(3), 271-281.

Poston, W. S. (1990). The biracial identity development model: A needed addition. *Journal of Counseling and Development, 69,* 152-155.

Ramsey, P. G. (1991). The salience of race in young children growing up in an all white community. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 8*(1), 28-34.

Ramsey, P. G., & Myers, C. (1990). Salience of race in young children's cognitive, affective, and behavioral responses to social environments. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 11,* 49-67.

Root, M. P. (Ed.). (1992). *Racially mixed people in America.* Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Root, M. P. (Ed.). (1996). *The Multiracial Experience: Racial borders as the new Frontier.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Root, M. P. (2001). *Loves revolution: Interracial marriages.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Root, M. P. (2003). Five mixed-race identities: From relic to revolution. In L. I. Winters & H. L. DeBose (Eds.), *New faces in a changing America: Multiracial identity in the 21st century* (pp. 3-21). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Rosenberg, M. (1965). *Society and the adolescent self-image.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Rosenberg, M. (1979). *Concerning the self* New York, NY: Basic Books.

Ruiz, S. (1990). Ethnic identity: Crisis and resolution. *Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, 18,* 29-40.

Rutter, M. (1987). Psychosocial resilience and protective mechanisms. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 57*(3), 316-331.

Samuels, M. S. (2009). Being raised by White people: Navigating racial difference among adopted multiracial adults. *Journal of Marriage and Family, 71*(1), 80-94.

Schoon, I. (2006). *Risk and resilience: Adaptations in changing times.* New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Seligman, M. E. P. (2005). Positive psychology, positive prevention, and positive therapy. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez (Eds.), *Handbook of positive psychology* (pp. 3-9). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Semaj, L. (1981). The development of racial classification abilities. *Journal of Negro Education, 59,* 41-47.

Snyder, C. R., & Lopez, S. J. (Eds.). (2006). *Positive psychology: The scientific and practical explorations of human strengths.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Stonequist, E. V. (1937). *The marginal man: A study in personality and culture conflict.* New York, NY: Russell & Russell.

Sue, S., & Kitano, H. (1973). Stereotypes as a measure of success. *Journal of Social Issues, 29,* 83-98.

Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2003). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice.* New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Udry, J. R., Li, R. M., & Hendrickson-Smith, J. (2003). Health and behavior risks of adolescents with mixed-race identity. *American Journal of Public Health, 93*(11), 1865-1870.

Umana-Taylor, A. J., & Shin, N. (2007). An examination of ethnic identity and self esteem with diverse populations: Exploring variations by ethnicity and geography. *Cultural Diversity and Ethnic Minority Psychology, 13*(2), 178-186.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2001, November). *The two or more races population: 2000.* (Publication No. C2KBR/01-6). Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/prod/2001pubs/c2kbr01-6.pdf

Vedantam, S. (2010). *The hidden brain: How our unconscious minds elect presidents, control markets, wage wars, and save our lives.* New York, NY: Spiegel & Grau.

Wardle, F. (1992). *Biracial identity: An ecological and developmental model.* (ED385376) Retrieved from http://www.eric.ed.gov/

Wehrly, B. (1996). *Counseling interracial individuals and families.* Alexandria, VA: American Counseling Association.

Werner, E. E. (2000). Protective factors and individual resilience. In J. P. Shonkoff & S. J. Meisels (Eds.), *Handbook of early childhood intervention* (pp. 115-132). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (1992). *Overcoming the odds: High-risk children from birth to adulthood.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Werner, E. E., & Smith, R. S. (2001). *Journeys from childhood to midlife: Risk, resilience, and recovery.* Ithaca, NY: Cornell University.

Wescott, N. A. (1991). *An exploration into the dynamics of identity development of biracial adolescents*. Paper presented at the No Na'Oihana Kakaa Conference, Honolulu, HI.

Williams, J. E., & Morland, J. K. (1976). *Race, color, and the young child*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press.

Winslow, E. B., Sandler, I. N., & Wolchik, S. A. (2006). Building resilience in children. In S. Goldstein & R. B. Brooks (Eds.), *Handbook of resilience in children* (pp. 337-356). New York, NY: Springer Science+Business Media, Inc.

Wright, M. A. (1998). *I'm chocolate, you're vanilla: Raising healthy black and biracial children in a race-conscious world.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Wylie, R. C. (1989). *Measures of self-concepts.* Lincoln, NE: University of Nebraska Press.

Appendix A

Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

Protective Factors Promoting Psychosocial Resilience in Biracial Youths

IRB # 07-23 Date Approved 10/28/09

You are invited to participate in a research study regarding the development of self-identity. The goal of this study is to identity factors that may contribute to the development of self-identity of multiracial youths. Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before you agree to be in the study.

If you decide to participate, you complete three short written questionnaires and participate in an audio-taped interview. Expected duration is about an hour to two hours.

Although there are no foreseeable risks from your participation in this study, you may experience discomfort sharing sensitive and personal information. You may enjoy this opportunity to express your thoughts, feelings and experiences about being multiracial.

Upon completion of the questionnaires and interview, you will receive a premier movie pass.

All responses to this study will be kept confidential. Your name or identity will not be linked in any way to the research data. The audio recording will be transcribed by a third party. We will protect your confidentiality by coding your information with a number so no one can trace your answers to your name, properly disposing of computer sheets and other papers, erasing audio tapes, limiting access to identifiable information, and storing research records in locked cabinets. The data derived from this study could be used in reports, presentations, and publications, but you will not be individually identified.

Your decision to take part in this study is voluntary. You are free to choose not to take part in the study or to stop taking part at any time without any penalty to you.

If you have any questions now, feel free to ask. If you have any questions later, you may contact Dr. Allan Morotti at the UAF School of Education (907) 474-6440 or at aamorotti@alaska.edu.

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, please contact the Research Coordinator in the Office of Research Integrity at 474-7800 (Fairbanks area) or 1-866-876-7800 (outside the Fairbanks area) or email bjwatson@alaska.edu.

I understand the procedures described above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I agree to participate in this study. I have been provided a copy of this form.

_____

Signature of Subject & Date

_____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent & Date

Appendix B

Demographic Questionnaire Data

Please read the following questions carefully. Try to answer each question accurately and to the best of your ability. Please answer all the questions.

1. Current city and state of residence: _____

2. Gender:
☐ Female ☐ Male

3. Date of birth: _____

4. Your place of birth: _____

5. Father's place of birth: _____

6. Mother's place of birth: _____

7. Parents' current marital status:
☐Married ☐Divorced ☐Separated ☐Widowed ☐Never married ☐Living with another partner

8. Your current marital status:
☐Married ☐Divorced ☐Separated ☐Widowed ☐Never married ☐Living with a partner

9. How many siblings (brothers and sisters) do you have? _____

10. If you have siblings, please indicate their age
Brother/s _____
Sister/s _____

11. Your Birth Order:
☐1st ☐2nd ☐3rd ☐Other (please specify) _____

12. Please indicate with whom you lived with for the majority of your life:
☐Both parents
☐Mother only - No contact with father
☐Father only - No contact with mother
☐Mother only - Contact with father
☐Father only - Contact with mother
☐Mother and step-parent – No contact with father
☐Father and step-parent – No contact with mother
☐Mother and step-parent – Contact with father
☐Father and step-parent – Contact with mother
☐Relatives/Others (please specify): _____

13. If your parents remarried, what was your stepparent's ethnic/racial background?

14. If you lived with relatives or other individuals, what is their ethnic/racial background?

15. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
☐ Elementary
☐ Junior High School
☐ Some High School
☐ High School Diploma
☐ Partial college/technical training/certification
☐ College Degree
☐ Some Graduate School
☐ Masters/Doctorate Degree

16. What is the city and state of the following schools you attended?
Elementary: _____
Middle/junior: _____
High School: _____

17. What is the highest level of education your mother completed?
☐ Elementary
☐ Junior High School
☐ Some High School
☐ High School Diploma
☐ Partial college/technical training/certification
☐ College Degree
☐ Some Graduate School
☐ Masters/Doctorate Degree

18. What is the highest level of education your father completed?
☐ Elementary
☐ Junior High School
☐ Some High School
☐ High School Diploma
☐ Partial college/technical training/certification
☐ College Degree
☐ Some Graduate School
☐ Masters/Doctorate Degree

19. What is your current occupation? _____

20. If married, what is your spouse's occupation? _____

21. What is your father's occupation? _____

22. What is your mother's occupation? _____

23. What was your family's socioeconomic class status as you grew up?
☐ Poor
☐ Working class
☐ Lower middle class
☐ Middle class
☐ Upper middle class
☐ Upper class

24. What is your parent's current socioeconomic class status?
☐ Poor
☐ Working class
☐ Lower middle class
☐ Middle class
☐ Upper middle class
☐ Upper class

25. What socioeconomic class status would you classify yourself now?
☐ Poor
☐ Working class
☐ Lower middle class
☐ Middle class
☐ Upper middle class
☐ Upper class

26. Growing up were you raised in a/n:
☐ Non-ethnically diverse community
☐ Somewhat ethnically diverse community
☐ Moderately ethnically diverse community
☐ Extremely ethnically diverse community

27. What was your residence pattern from birth until the present? Please list the places you lived and your ages at the time. For example:

Fairbanks, Alaska	0 until 12 years
Germany	12 until 18 years
Hilo, Hawaii	18 until 22 years

28. Did you grow up in a military family?
☐ Yes ☐ No

Appendix C

Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale
(Rosenberg, 1965)

Please indicate your level of agreement/disagreement to each of the following statements.

1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.

   Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.

   Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.

   Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.

   Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.

   Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.

   Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.

   Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.

   Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. I certainly feel useless at times.

   Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. At times I think I am no good at all.

    Strongly Agree Agree Disagree Strongly Disagree

Appendix D

Multigroup Ethnic Identity Measure
(Phinney, 1992)

In this country, people come from a lot of different cultures and there are many different words to describe the different backgrounds or *ethnic groups* that people come from. Some examples of the names of ethnic groups are Hispanic or Latino, Black or African American, Asian American, Japanese, Korean, Filipino, American Indian or Native American, Mexican American, Caucasian or White, Italian American, and many others. These questions are about your ethnicity/ethnicities or your ethnic group/s and how you feel about it or react to it.

Please fill in: In terms of ethnic group, I consider myself to be _____

Use the numbers below to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

---

1. I have spent time trying to find out more about my own ethnic group, such as its history, traditions, and customs.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

2. I am active in organizations or social groups that include mostly members of my own ethnic group.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

3. I have a clear sense of my ethnic background and what it means for me.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

4. I think a lot about how my life will be affected by my ethnic group membership.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

5. I am happy that I am a member of the group I belong to.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

6. I have a strong sense of belonging to my own ethnic group.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

7. I understand pretty well what my ethnic group membership means to me.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

8. In order to learn more about my ethnic background, I have often talked to other people about my ethnic group.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

9. I have a lot of pride in my ethnic group.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

10. I participate in cultural practices of my own group, such as special food, music, or customs.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

11. I feel a strong attachment towards my own ethnic group.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

12. I feel good about my cultural or ethnic background.

(4) Strongly agree (3) Agree (2) Disagree (1) Strongly disagree

13. My ethnicity is

1. Asian or Asian American, including Japanese, Korean, and others
2. Black or African American
3. Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
4. White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic
5. American Indian/Native American including Aleut, Athabaskan, Eskimo, and others
6. Mixed; Parents from two different groups
7. Other (write in):_____

14. My father's ethnicity is

1. Asian or Asian American, including Japanese, Korean, and others
2. Black or African American
3. Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
4. White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic
5. American Indian/Native American including Eskimo, Aleut, Athabaskan, and others
6. Mixed; Parents from two different groups
7. Other (write in):_____

15. My mother's ethnicity is
    1. Asian or Asian American, including Japanese, Korean, and others
    2. Black or African American
    3. Hispanic or Latino, including Mexican American, Central American, and others
    4. White, Caucasian, Anglo, European American; not Hispanic
    5. American Indian/Native American including Eskimo, Aleut, Athabaskan, and others
    6. Mixed; Parents from two different groups
    7. Other (write in): _____

Appendix E

Interview Guide

Interview Guide

Hello, we will now begin the interview portion. As stated in the informed consent, the interview portion will be audio-recorded.

****

I. SELF AND FAMILY IDENTITY

1. How do you personally define yourself ethnically/racially?

2. How do you think society defines you ethnically/racially?

3. How do your parents ethnically/racially identify you and the reason for their choice?

4. What do you think about how they ethnically/racially identify you?

5. What did your parents tell you about being biracial?

6. Did you identify more closely with one parent than the other while growing up? Which one and why?

7. Does your family ever discuss the use of biracial labels? If so, what were the labels?

8. Do you publicly use any biracial labels to define yourself? What labels do you use?

II. ETHNIC/RACIAL AWARENESS

1. When did you first notice that your parents were of different ethnic/racial backgrounds?

2. When did you first notice that you were different from both your parents?

3. What is your earliest memory regarding being biracial?

4. When did you first notice that other people were also of different ethnic/racial backgrounds?

5. What first influenced your racial identity development: physical features associated with race, or ethnic aspects of your heritage? Why?

6. When did you first discuss your racial identity with your parents?

7. What impact has your physical appearance had on how you identify yourself and how others identify you?

8. What memories from childhood, adolescence and adulthood stand out as important in the development of your racial identity?

III. FAMILY/PERSONAL COPING SKILLS

1. Do you have an extended family? On both sides? Did your family maintain contact with the extended family? Are you closer to one side than another?

2. Who do you discuss ethnic and race issues with?

3. Do your self-perceptions differ from others' perceptions of your ethnic/racial identity? If difference exists, how do you manage this discrepancy? Do you feel pressured to accept the ethnic/racial identity others assign to you? Why or why not?

4. Does your ethnic/racial identity fluctuate according to the particular social situation? In what ways?

IV. SOCIALIZATION AGENTS

HOME:

1. What was your family's role in the development of your racial self-identity?

SCHOOLS:

2. What do you perceive was your school's role in shaping your racial/ethnic self-identity?

3. How did your previous educational experiences helped or hindered your: ethnic/racial self-identity?

PEERS:

4. How has geographic location, neighborhoods, schools, friends, and partners influenced your racial/ethnic identity?

5. How did your friends, both at home and at school, influence your ethnic/racial identity development?

6. How much, and what is the nature of contact you have had with others of similar ethnic/racial background? In what way did this affect your ethnic/racial identity development?

7. Who were your most influential mentor or role model and what was his or her ethnic/racial identity? Please share about that person.

8. How did this person influence your ethnic/racial identity?

VI. CULTURAL ACCOMMODATIONS

1. To what degree do you feel that you have a clear sense of your ethnic/racial identity that you are committed to?

2. How did you arrive at an ethnic/racial identity or what is needed for you to achieve a clear sense of your ethnic/racial identity that you can be committed to?

3. How do you anticipate you will ethnically/racially identify yourself in the future?

VII. WRAPUP

1. If you have a child/children or plan to do so, how has your upbringing influenced or will influence your own child rearing practice?

2. If question 1 is answered: What would you do similarly and/or differently from how you were raised with your own child/children?

3. Is there anything else you would like to add to the interview?

Thank you for your help!

Research results will be available upon request when the dissertation is completed.

Your input is invaluable and greatly appreciated. Once again, thank you for contributing your valuable time and energy toward this study.